IN THE STEPS OF SHAKESPEARE

RUSSELL THORNDIKE

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(*Seven Volumes*)

SYBIL THORNDIKE: A BIOGRAPHY

IN THE STEPS OF SHAKESPEARE

by

RUSSELL THORNDIKE

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PREFACE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *is without question the most mysterious star in the heavens of the great.*

The private and public lives of the few god-like beings who approach his magnitude are recorded in full detail, and are therefore not mysterious, whereas very little is known actually about our National Poet. A few legal statements concerning him are all that can be vouched for by the ultra-critical. We actually know more of the father's history than the son's. But how shall a man be known? *By their fruits ye shall know them*, and it must be by his works that we know Shakespeare as great.

It is the mystery about his master-mind that in latter days has called forth so many surmises, some of which have developed into cult. To mention two of these—the theories about Bacon and the Earl of Oxford. How many books have been written which prove to some conclusively that Shakespeare was but the pen-name of one of these scholarly gentlemen! But so long as Shakespeare exists between covers, and is seen upon the stage, does it matter very much who he was? For the chief thing we are concerned about is what he did, whoever "he" may have been. As far as his plots went, we know that he just sat down and improved the plots of others beyond all recognition. Certainly one part of this Shakespeare was an actor and producer of plays. One has only to play in them to know that he knew his job, by knowing exactly what the actor could do or could not do, and such knowledge made him the good friend of good actors for all time, by giving them the best medium for their art in the shape of good actable parts in good actable plays, while to the student of human nature, whether actor, reader, or audience, he bequeathed a great family of characters in whom all the qualities of humanity, good and bad, can be found.

Did I have to subscribe to any of the cults which seek to rob the actor, Will Shakespeare, of his authorship, I should incline towards the theory that he was a Rosicrucian, which seems to have been a forerunner of Rotarians, a club where the best people of various professions congregated and exchanged views. In any case, even if Shakespeare is Shakespeare the

actor from Stratford, he must have added to his Grammar School scholarship by picking the brains of the cleverest men, which makes him all the cleverer. I like to picture him as he is shown on his tomb at Stratford; a shrewd business man, as good impresarios should be. A notebook always ready to jot down a good saying of My Lord So-and-so's or a quick jest of a Stratford cobbler. Yes, a snapper-up of the most unconsidered trifles, but able to transform the trifle into wit and learning.

But what concerns this book is not so much who wrote the plays but whether the man who wrote them travelled to the places which he paints. Did he?

Well, whether he did or not, he might have paraphrased one of his own lines: "Why then the world's mine oyster which I with *pen* will ope."

Let us, therefore, take his plays and wander in the steps of his British scenes, allowing that even if he did not actually tread them all, we can walk them ourselves with the guide book of his imagination.

Therefore let us follow in the steps of his mind's travel, and open up the "locations" (to use a film term) as they are today with some thoughts of what they were when Shakespeare wrote, and describe the action as he framed it in each scene.

This volume deals with his "settings" in Britain, and the starting point of such a tour is obviously the lovely little town where he was born and to which he retired to die. A place of inspired scenes and people that fill up so many of his plays. It was also the scene of his first steps physically and mentally. Let us, therefore, follow them in and around Stratford-on-Avon.

Chapter One

SHAKESPEARE'S EARLY YEARS AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON

It is quite certain that Shakespeare's first actual journey took place within that little house of wood and plaster where he was born.

It stands in Henley Street, where his father John Shakespeare carried on business as a glover and fellmonger. The journey in question would have been in the arms of the midwife, who would have taken him from his mother's bed to be washed.

A gaunt upstairs room with an uneven floor is this first scene of our poet's life, and as one stands in it today one imagines him lying in his cradle, mewling and puking at the beamed ceiling. One thinks of the relatives and neighbours who came to gape at that baby face, just as visitors now gape at the bust in the corner of the room.

It is generally accepted that he was born on the 23rd of April 1564. At any rate there is a tradition that he died, like his own Cassius, upon his birthday, and the date of his death is given as Tuesday, the 23rd of April 1616.

On the 26th he was baptized, and we may presume that this was his first journey out of doors, when he was carried to the font of the parish church.

This beautiful building, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, stands peacefully beside the river, its graceful spire rising amongst the trees. The meadow of the south bank is in the foreground, and if we stand upon the Avon Bridge we get the best view of this sanctuary which Shakespeare loved, and it was surely this scene that he thought on when he wrote his churchyard scene in Hamlet.

To the pilgrim today the tomb of the poet is the magnet which draws him inside the building. The actual grave is close to the north wall of the chancel, and above it is the slab bearing the famous epitaph which has ever been attributed to Shakespeare's own pen.

"GOOD FREND FOR IESUS SAKE FORBEARE
TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOASED HEARE;
BLESTE BE THE MAN THAT SPARES THES STONES,
AND CVRST BE HE THAT MOVES MY BONES."

It is recorded that the transfer of bones from graves to the charnel-house was, in Shakespeare's day, a common practice at Stratford-on-Avon, and no doubt the poet wished to avoid this degradation.

The monument on the north side of the chancel and let into the wall was erected within seven years of his death, and the bust of soft bluish limestone may disappoint those who are expecting the poet's face to be refined rather than robust, as the sculptor has executed it. This sculptor was one Janssen, or, as he would be called in England, Johnson, but whether he was Gerard Jans-sen, "tombe-maker of Amsterdam" who lived in London, or one of his sons is an open question. The most striking feature of the head is the mighty forehead, a veritable dome of learning.

The original colouring has been restored, as in 1793 it had been whitewashed, and so it remained till its restoration in 1861. It gives us today a good indication of the actual colouring of the man himself. Light hazel eyes. Auburn hair and beard. A doublet of scarlet, with an unsleeved gown worn over it of black. The figure looks at us over a cushion, beneath which is an inscription in Latin and English. The right hand holds a quill and the left lies upon a sheet of paper.

If we compare this face with the one authentic portrait of Shakespeare engraved by Martin Droeshout, and prefixed to the First Folio of 1623, we get a vivid idea in the first instance of what the mature poet looked like and in the latter the young actor.

In the Stratford Memorial Library we can see the original Droeshout from which the artist engraved, and there is no doubt that Janssen's bust and the Droeshout portrait are faithful representations of the poet "in his habit as he lived".

There are others which we can admire though we must not credit them. In the Stratford Collection we can see the Ely Palace Portrait, which closely resembles the Droeshout. This was discovered in 1846 by the Bishop of Ely in some obscure broker's shop, and on cleaning it the date 1603 came to light. On the Bishop's death in 1864 it was purchased by the print-seller, Henry Graves, and presented to Stratford. In oils upon an oak panel one foot eight inches by one foot four inches, this portrait is supposed by its defenders not to have been a copy of the Droeshout, but an earlier picture painted from life.

Not so authentic is the Chandos portrait, which is preserved in the National Portrait Gallery, and owned at different times

by Betterton and Mrs. Barry. Legend has it that it was originally owned by John Taylor, the actor, and painted either by him or Richard Burbage. But even though it may not be accepted by the ultra-critical, it seems quite feasible that one of Shakespeare's own colleagues should have painted his portrait. But be that as it may, the Droeshout defies carping. Shakespeare's great colleague and friend, Ben Jonson, who wrote lines to the Reader in accompaniment to this engraving in the Folio, was in perfect agreement with the two editors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, and it is inconceivable that these three loyal supporters of Shakespeare would have tolerated the inclusion of a portrait that was a false memorial. Though Ben Jonson wrote "looke not on his picture, but his Booke", he would have resented any picture that did not convey the man he loved, and that he did love him is obvious from his longer tribute, which was inscribed "To the Memory of my Beloued the Avthor Mr. William Shakespeare *and what he hath left vs.*" In that memorial there is a line of tribute which surely sums up the poet's destiny as we now know it. "He was not of an age, but for all time."

If there were other portraits which they might have chosen, the decision for the Droeshout may have been in compliment to Ben Jonson too, for it has been said that it represents Shakespeare in one of Ben Jonson's characters, which he is known to have acted, Old Knowall in *Every Man in His Humor*.

One difficulty arises which I think is easily overcome. Martin Droeshout was born, according to the registers of the Dutch Church of Austinfriars, in 1601. He would therefore have been but fifteen years of age at Shakespeare's death, and twenty-two when he engraved his picture. But the Droeshout family included other professional artists besides Martin. Michael, his father, was an engraver, and as Austinfriars was close to Bishopsgate where Shakespeare lived when writing his plays, Martin may have had access to a former portrait, perhaps by his father, of Shakespeare the young actor, rather than the maturer playwright whom the boy had known and respected.

It is safe, therefore, to own that what was good enough for the loyal editors is, today, good enough for us, and one may safely take the Droeshout as the young Shakespeare and the Janssen Bust as the retired and respected citizen of Stratford-on-Avon.

But we must not linger at the Tomb, for we have a long journey before returning to it at the close of this book. We have first to travel where Shakespeare's steps were actually

known to walk, and then in fancy follow the steps of his imagination and travel with his characters to the places in which he sets their stages: see what these places look like today, and then transform them to the dates of the plays' happenings.

Until he reached the age of seven, young William would not have been admitted to the Grammar School, but would have been given lessons in reading and writing by his mother, who before her marriage to John Shakespeare was Mary Arden, the youngest and, it is assumed, the favourite daughter of Robert Arden, a farmer of means who died before Mary's marriage, but left her a good farm in the village of Wilmecote. Besides this property of sixty acres she also had bequeathed to her a reversion to a portion of a larger property at Snitterfield. This last was the village which connected the Ardens with the Shakespeares, for the poet's grandfather, Richard, held some of this land in tenancy.

From the time of his alliance with the Ardens in 1552, John Shakespeare rose to be an important citizen of Stratford, and was evidently highly respected by his neighbours, for the Corporation appointed him overseer to malt and bread, created him a "chamberlain of the Borough", then alderman, and lastly High Bailiff. Although he was a man of much business and many interests, and could keep accounts with the best, he was yet unable to write, even his own name, and so no doubt little William's lessons came perforce from his mother. As there was an ancient and gently born family of Ardens who are supposed to have been related to the Ardens of Wilmecote, Mary would no doubt have been brought up as a lady and educated according to that station.

Professor Raleigh of Oxford has wisely pointed out that Shakespeare has "an unerringly sure touch with the character of his high-born ladies", and it is good to think that he learnt this from the gentle refinement of his mother. One can picture him accompanying her on visits to her old home, and it was probably there that he first collected copy for future use in the ways of farming. No doubt recalling a wild summer, and hearing the complaints of such from the farmers at Wilmecote, he was afterwards prompted to write:

> The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
> The Ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
> Hath rotted, ere his youth attained a beard.
> The fold stands empty in the drownèd field,
> And crows are fatted with the murrion flock.

To the north of the gentle Avon stretches the forest of Arden, and here too he must have roamed as a very small boy, or sitting on the grass beside his mother he began to find mysterious "tongues in trees" as he listened to their whisperings. "Books in the running brooks : sermons in stones and good in everything." Certainly no writer ever found more good in most things than he did. Take his villains. Despite his obvious enjoyment in depicting their villainies, he always finds a loophole for our forgiveness. The most of them own their faults at least, though generally at the last. The rascally fat knight, John Falstaff, who states that he thinks the Devil will not have him damned, "Lest the oil that is in me should set Hell on fire", had the grace to babble of green fields when he was called to die, and then cried upon God three times. Shakespeare's unfair treatment of Richard III we yet love, however dread, for his grim sense of humour. We respect that lewd fellow Borachio for desiring nothing but the reward of a villain. There are many moments when we feel sorry for the two Macbeths, and the same can be said for Claudius, despite our love for Hamlet. That Italian fiend Iachimo calls himself "wretch" in his confession, and the three conspirators against Henry V ask in their contrition for forgiveness as they go to death. The usurping Duke Frederick owns his faults at last and makes restoration. The cruel brother Oliver does the same. The villains in *The Tempest* see the errors of their ways. In all of them he shows us some good streak. The worst of them all, Honest Iago, at least owns to himself the good in Othello, and although he cannot endure him, allows him to be one of a constant, loving and noble nature. But there is less good in him than any. Macbeth is an angel to him, and perhaps the only thing we can admire is the self-possession which he shows in his last words: "Demand me nothing. What you know, you know. From this time forth I never will speak word."

And yet Iago is loved. He is loved by the actor who is fortunately called upon to play him, and loved for his thorough-paced villainy. There is that much to commend him. He is a grand part, and one which ever leaves the portrayer of Othello in doubt as to whether he has chosen the better role. Like Brutus, Antony and Cassius, Othello and Iago will ever remain the leading actor's problem of which to choose for the best advantage of his craft.

As John Shakespeare was not as gently born as his wife, it is certain that he would have had but little time to spare for

the education of our national giant. To his profession of fellmonger and glover he added that of butcher, so that beside the sale of meat, he could keep his trade of gloves and leggings supplied from his own skins, which were bred no doubt on the pastures of Snitterfield. The biographer Rowe tells us that John Shakespeare was a considerable dealer in wool, and we know also that he transacted business with corn and timber. So with so many interests to look after we are bound to imagine little Will learning at his mother's feet. When the child was five years old an event occurred which must have had a great effect on his mind and influenced him later.

It was this. As High Bailiff of Stratford, his father officially entertained a distinguished company of actors. It was the first time in the history of Stratford-on-Avon that such an honour had been extended. These actors were members of two separate bands of players, and would have been the best of their kind, since one band was the Queen's Company of Players and the other that of the Earl of Leicester.

The first of these was paid nine shillings by John Shakespeare on behalf of the town, and the second only twelve pence, these payments being made for the first performance of each band before himself and his brother aldermen, and to which the town was invited free of all cost. It was apparently a custom of those days that a play commanded by the Mayor or High Bailiff of a Borough was a free show to the citizens, though in other performances they would be required to pay the usual price. This information, with the date given as between Michaelmas 1568 and 1569, comes to us from the writings of one Willis, who happened to be born in Gloucester in the same year that Will Shakespeare was born in Stratford. His account runs: "Every one that wills comes in without money, the Mayor giving unto the players a reward as he thinks fit for to shew respect unto them. At such a play my father took me with him and made me stand between his legs, as he sate upon one of the benches, where we saw and heard very well. The sight took such impression in me, that when I came towards man's estate it was as fresh in my memory." (From *Mount Tabor. Private Exercises of a Penitent Sinner*, published in the year of his age 77. *Anno Dom.* 1639.) Like little Willis, it is quite certain that little Will went to his father's performance at Stratford, and so gained his first impression of the stage which was to be his world.

Another famous company of actors which Shakespeare must have seen in his young days was the Coventry Players

of Corpus Christi. They performed at Bristol in 1570, and Stratford would have lain in their direct path of tour. The nearby Kenilworth would also have given the young poet a chance to see more plays, for when the Queen was entertained there by Leicester in 1575 he would have been eleven years of age, and so old enough to make the short journey. We can assume that the family all went to witness such exceptional festivities, which were advertised the country round. The next year other companies of players visited Stratford, and it is on record that from 1579 and for the next eight years an annual visit was made.

Later, in 1587, no less than five companies are reported to have played in Shakespeare's town, including the three famous bands of the Queen's, Leicester's, and the company supported by Essex. We may be sure that Will Shakespeare on all these occasions was thrilled by the slogan: "THE ACTORS ARE COME HITHER."

Travellers would spread the news in the town that they had "Coted them on the way and hither are they coming to offer service." So Shakespeare had plenty of opportunity to see the best actors in the world for comedy, history, or pastoral: players who found that Seneca was not too heavy for them nor Plautus too light. At seven years old Will would have entered the Free School of the town, called the King's New School. This was a grammar school, and was ruled by Walter Roche, an Oxford fellow of Corpus Christi. He was succeeded by one Thomas Hunt, who held the curacy of Luddington. A third, Thomas Jenkins, is supposed to have been the prototype for Shakespeare's amusing Welsh schoolmaster, Sir Hugh Evans. His schoolmasters obviously made as great an impression upon Will as they do on most boys. He drew many portraits of them. Pinch, in the *Comedy of Errors*, "a needy hollow-eyed sharp-looking wretch. A living dead man." Holophernes, the master in *Love's Labour's Lost*, who converses with the curate so pedantically. We have also Lucentio disguised as a schoolmaster using Latin translations to make love to Bianca, and in the same play of the *Taming of the Shrew* the drunken pedant is a cruel though comic caricature. No doubt one of his own masters had a liking for the bottle.

Shakespeare's masters would have been well versed in Ovid, the most popular Latin author of that day. They would advance those who had mastered their "horn-book" of grammar to a working knowledge of Horace, Virgil, Plautus, Seneca and

Cicero. With the help of such authors the pupils would have been grounded in Logic and Rhetoric. To the advanced pupil was added Greek, but it is doubtful whether Shakespeare absorbed more than a smattering of this tongue, though he was well versed in the Grecian legends. These, however, he may have studied later from the English translations then in common use. He certainly did not seek knowledge for its own sake. He sought it for the making of plays.

It is noticeable through all his work touching on school or schoolmastering that he made fun of it, though perhaps when he was confronted, as he was in later days, with the finest scholars of his time he may have felt the regret of his Andrew Aguecheek, at not having bestowed that time in the tongues, as he had in fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting. "O had I but followed the arts!" One finds the same regret when he makes old Gremio say: "O this learning, what a thing it is." He admired learning, of course, but he saw the humour of its pedantry.

No doubt young Will went forth many a morning "whining" at having to spend long hours in the classroom, his face made shiny with his mother's scrubbing, his satchel growing heavier as he crept like a snail unwillingly with heavy looks, but full of joy when at last he was relieved from books and could rush off with his companions to tickle trout in the river, or armed with bow and arrows to play at outlaws in the forest of Arden.

By the time William had reached the age of thirteen his father's hitherto prosperous merchandising began to wane, and this, with an increasing family, brought poverty. His son Gilbert was born in 1566. He became a haberdasher in London. Joan, born in 1569, married William Hart and survived her famous brother. Anne, born in 1571, died eight years later, when William was fifteen, and something of his sorrow at this event can be traced in the grief of Laertes for Ophelia, and Sebastian's for Viola. Richard was born in 1573 and died at Stratford in 1613, while the last, Edmund, who became an actor, was buried at St. Saviour's, Southwark, which can claim now to be the Cathedral Church of the Stage. The great bell of this church was tolled on the day of the funeral, which was accounted a high honour in Elizabethan days.

John Shakespeare tried hard to weather his financial storm by selling property, but his debts increased, and to avoid creditors he not only absented himself from services at the Parish Church, but did not attend the town councils from the same cause, and so his place was filled by another alderman, which did poor John

a good deal of harm in Stratford, for he was publicly accused of "not coming to the halles, nor hath not done of long time".

It is obvious that the family affairs being in such dire straits the strictest economy was needed, and in order to save the wages which might have gone to an outside assistant, what more natural than that Will should be taken from school at the earliest opportunity to help his father in his work?

There was an old parish clerk of Stratford who towards the end of that century declared that the poet on leaving school was bound apprentice to a butcher. This must have been to his own father, and there is a record of Aubrey's, one of the poet's biographers, which seems to ring true when he says, describing Will as a slaughterman: "When he killed a calf, he would do it in a high style, and make a speech."

The same author also asserts that the famous playwright had been "in his younger years a schoolmaster in the country". Perhaps it was as assistant to his old school, for only the head-master would be named in the records.

The fact that he shows in his plays a remarkable knowledge of the law is not sufficient reason for affirming, as some do, that he was ever employed in a local lawyer's office, for he had great aptitude in later years for picking up the essential details of technical knowledge which he might need to put into the mouths of his characters.

Till the age of eighteen he kept at home, and in his wanderings through the adjacent hamlet of Shottery he met and wooed Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a well-to-do yeoman who had recently died. Anne was some eight years older than her lover, and the match was obviously "clapp'd up suddenly", for there is a bond preserved in the Worcester Registry, given before marriage, which secured the Bishop in giving the licence when the banns had been asked only once. As the Hathaways found the sureties for this bond and not the Shakespeares, it seems to indicate their insistence on a speedy marriage, and when we read that the poet's eldest child Susanna was baptized only six months after the wedding we can see the reason for their haste.

Although there are many examples of Shakespeare's advice against marrying a woman older than oneself, there must have been something of romance in their love-making. The picturesque Hathaway cottage, timbered and thatched, which is still preserved to us, and lies at right angles to the road, was an ideal setting for lovers. One pictures the eighteen-year-old youth meeting Anne upon that little path that leads to the door, and one sees

them in imagination sitting cosily together in that settle which we still can see and where the poet no doubt told many a story by the winter's fire.

Country-bred and uneducated, Anne was not the woman to accompany her gifted husband to the capital and Court, and in that perhaps the union was not all that might have been desired, though there is no reason to suppose it was unhappy when we remember that his thoughts were constantly straying back to his beloved Stratford, and often his steps too, till at last he successfully worked towards the goal of retirement in a prosperous home with his first love.

His dramatic escape from Stratford, brought about by the necessity of evading the law, did not occur till three or four years after marriage, and by that time his next two children were born, a twin boy and girl, Hamnet and Judith.

They were named after his great friends Hamnet Sadler and Judith his wife, who kept a bakehouse in Stratford.

Much to his father's grief the boy died at the age of twelve, but since the Sadlers had sponsored the children the bond of friendship continued between them and the poet, who in his will ordered that Hamnet Sadler should be paid one pound, six and eightpence, "for to buy him a ringe".

The reason for Shakespeare's sudden departure from his home town was evidently more than a nine days' wonder in Stratford, for his biographer was able to collect full details from old gossips in the parish many years after Shakespeare's death, and the allusions to the episode which caused it in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* bear out the veracity of the tale.

Whether his restless spirit wished to roam abroad and seek out wider experience, or whether the burdens of his young family were too depressing for his soaring ambitions, it is certain that for a time Shakespeare fell into bad company, young fellows who did not hesitate to take part in the wildest pranks, and like the students of Oxford, the centre of the kingdom's learning and intelligence, who did not hesitate, and had not for many generations, to become the most notorious poachers in all England, so Shakespeare's roystering companions persuaded him, or perhaps he them, to the exciting pastime of deer-stealing, a crime which was treated lightly by those who did not suffer by it.

More than once they made raids upon the herds in the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, who was the principal landowner of the pretty little village of Charlcote, which is situated a little outside Stratford-on-Avon.

The Hall is of stately Elizabethan Gothic architecture, and the Avon flows through the wooded park.

Now Shakespeare had good reason to bear a personal resentment towards Sir Thomas, for, being the most zealous of Protestants, it was he who had reported to the Commission that John Shakespeare did not attend church for fear of process for debt. Here was the incentive that drove young Shakespeare into playing his pranks against Sir Thomas.

It has been said by an Archdeacon in Gloucestershire that the squire of Charlcote had "oft whipped and sometimes imprisoned the young poet".

Shakespeare, thinking this punishment too severe, sought revenge for such ill-treatment by making a ribald ballad upon his enemy. The purport of this ballad was made obvious to its readers, since the Lucy family carried a "dozen white luces" in their coat of arms. The luce is a heraldic term for a pike, and the poet played upon these fish with the words, "O LOUSIE LUCY", and later in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, he further ridiculed the old gentleman by making him his absurd Justice Shallow, and in the first scene of this play he makes Master Slender tell us that his cousin's family "may give the dozen white luces in their coat", to which Hugh Evans, the Welsh parson, requotes with unknowing humour, "a dozen white louses do become an old coat well".

A further allusion which seems to prove the deer-stealing incident without a doubt is spoken by Shallow to Falstaff in his accusation: "Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge."

To which the merry rogue replies: "But not kissed your keeper's daughter."

Like Thomas Lucy, Robert Shallow follows this by saying: "The Council shall know this."

It has been pointed out that this venomous arrow of wit went home into the heart of the Lucy family, for in their library was discovered but one early edition of the poet's plays, and that a copy of the 1619 Quarto of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

But Sir Thomas was a powerful man, and could make things hot for a young poacher possessed with such an impertinent wit, and so Will Shakespeare was advised to leave Warwickshire and to hide in London till the fault was forgotten.

Although to the ambitious youth London must have seemed, as indeed it proved, his El Dorado, there is no doubt that leaving his home and beloved countryside must have wrenched at his

heart's strings, and it was surely this experience that gave him in after years such a poignant touch when writing of exile, banishment, or leave-taking. The pathetic farewell of the exiled Mowbray, who, with the equally bitter Bolingbroke banished by Richard, uttered such heartrending grief at departure: that "good old man" Adam resigning home at the end of his life to follow his young master Orlando into Arden: that cynical Touchstone of the same play on hearing that he has reached Arden, exclaiming: "The more fool I; when I was at home, I was in a better place": the unfortunate Romeo, preferring death to banishment because to him there was no world without Verona walls: these are but a few examples showing us that he had felt the bitterness of home-sickness. Against this, however, there was the thrill of following his destiny, and like his merry Petruchio, of seeking fortunes farther than at home, where small experience grows.

Whether he accepted service with a band of players bound for the capital we do not know, or did he merely escape in their company to seek what fortune he could? Certain it is, however, that, either in a mummers' company or alone, he said farewell to home and the Warwickshire countryside he knew and loved so dearly in order to take the long road to London, where we will follow in his steps.

When he had gone, no doubt Sir Thomas Lucy quickly forgot his troublesome, poetical poacher, though it could not have been very long before the fame of the Stratford playwright reached the old man's ears, and noting how well he was doing in London, it must have been galling to know that it was his harshness that had put his enemy's feet upon the rungs of such a successful ladder.

One wonders too what attitude Anne Hathaway took at her young husband's sudden departure. She certainly had cause for bitterness, and if she showed it, can be excused. Perhaps it was from her that Shakespeare learned to put such cold criticism against her husband into the mouth of Lady Macduff. Poor Anne might well have said to her gossips: "He wants the natural touch", or did she have sufficient understanding to realize that her gifted husband's natural touch belonged to all the children of men as much as to his own? If her spirit was large enough for such thinking, why then she found a great compensation during her lonely years. She must have known that eventually nothing could have barred his way to London and the Court,

and that the unfortunate episode at Charlcote had only brought things to a head and hastened his departure.

The world owes that "poor sequester'd stag" a lot. Its death not only speeded Shakespeare to his goal, but inspired him to write that wonderful invective against deer-slaying, so that although his Master Page can make our mouths water for a hot venison pasty, he compels us to weep with the dying stag in *As You Like It*. It was through realizing the importance of Charlcote in deciding Shakespeare's fate that I recently made a pilgrimage to see the house again. Wishing to approach it as Shakespeare must have done across the fields, I asked an old gentleman, who was strolling in the street of a nearby village, if he could direct me. He was a Dickensian type, both in his dress and charm of manner. He had that kindly old-fashioned mellowness about him, and he proved a good friend to me, for he insisted that he should be my guide. He maintained that he knew the most beautiful peep of Charlcote through the trees, and that he was afraid I might miss it if alone. I pointed out that since he had been walking in the opposite direction I had no wish to take him out of his way, when he cut me short by saying: "Please don't deprive me of the privilege. And it is a privilege to be able to show a stranger something very lovely."

Our way took us through the churchyard, and he remarked that I must be surprised to see so large a church for so small a hamlet. I told him I had often wondered why in many small parishes one often found churches with accommodation far beyond the necessities of the parishioners. We argued about this, and quoted many examples that we had met, and finally came to the conclusion that the old builders built largely to the glory of God, and the fact that they looked empty of worshippers though the whole parish were congregated never worried them.

I asked where the Vicarage was, and he pointed out a large country mansion, ideal for a rich country squire. I looked at the beautiful lawn and gardens walled in below the churchyard, and then at the vast roofs and the impressive clock-topped stables, and I thought of the poor incumbent who would be responsible for dilapidations, wondering whether he could get sufficient help from Queen Anne's Bounty. But my friend assured me that I need not worry on that score since it was a rich living, and was the source of income to the Archdeaconry.

I raised the question of fairness over the disparity in Livings. Why should one parish be rich and the next poor?

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He answered this with the question: "So long as people are allowed to leave money in their wills, why shouldn't they bequeath it to people or institutions that they love?"

There is much food for thought in this. In the old days citizens of the City of London resided in the boundaries of their city parish church, and those who had attended it and loved it in their lives remembered it at their death. Many of these churches, designed by the great Wren, are very wealthy, but now can only claim some few office caretakers amongst their Sunday congregation. The sites of these beautiful and historic buildings are in most cases fabulous. Whether or no they should be removed is a knotty problem for the Bishop of London.

We left the churchyard, and passed through a gate to the fields. As we walked, he pointed out the trees of Charlcote, and then the Deer Park, lamenting that shortage of money in super-tax is compelling so many ancestral homes to dispense with their herds. He praised the care of deer, and quoting *As You Like It*, said that he had once seen a stag weeping, and ever since had been quite satisfied that Shakespeare could never have killed another since the one that caused his disgrace. "I am sure he was a great deal sorrier for the deer's death than he was for old Lucy's loss."

Presently he trotted ahead in his eagerness and pointed. I hurried after him across the rough field filled with lazy cattle. "There," he said, "in my opinion, is the most poetical view of Charlcote. As our thoughts are now with Shakespeare the Poacher, let us try to imagine that it is moonlight instead of sun-setting. The poet and his wild companions are watching the house as we are, and they might well have been daunted by its size. However, they had sworn to kill a stag yonder, and so they crept on."

Just as I was trying to conjure up the scene which was so real to him, I saw a real poacher in the shape of a hovering hawk. "Shakespeare's ghost," I laughed.

"Oh, I don't think his soul has been put into a hawk," he said solemnly.

He then pointed out the beauties of the place, for which he said he had a great affection, and we both found ourselves sorry that Shakespeare had known it under the rule of Sir Thomas Lucy. "Well, never mind," he went on. "We wouldn't be without Justice Shallow, you know, and we shouldn't have got him without old Sir Thomas."

It was the stillest evening. The old walls were tinged with the warmth of the setting sun. Even the cattle seemed to be enjoying the rich quiet mellowness around them.

Suddenly there arose a scream from an adjoining field. The old gentleman's gentle face became tragic as he whispered quickly: "That was a death cry. Your Shakespeare's ghost has made another kill."

Sure enough we saw the hawk flying away, but we noticed that there was nothing in his claws.

"Perhaps our voices scared him," he said, "and he only had time to wound some poor little beast. We had better go and find out." Despite his age and immaculate clothes, he felt obliged to scramble his way through a hedge and explore the next field. And so despite my age and not so immaculate clothes, I felt obliged to follow him. But we could find no signs of rabbit, bird, or field-mouse, and the hawk had disappeared.

"Perhaps it was a little beast who just screamed because it was badly scared," said the old gentleman. "I do hope so. The only trouble is," he went on inconsistently, "that poor hawk will be hungry."

He was one of Shakespeare's good old men, full of sympathy with all, and it was pleasant to meet such a one in such a peaceful spot.

Driving back to Warwick, where I had planned to spend the night, the countryside seemed to whisper: "It was the memory of our trees, our grass, and the scent of our flowers that kept the love of nature alive in Shakespeare's heart, when he first turned his back on us to face his destiny."

"Quite right," I thought in answer. "And they were Warwickshire fairies, too, who took the stage by the Duke's Oak in Athens wood a league without the town. It was these hills, dales, and brier-bushes, this parkland and these paled boundaries that he thought on in his pastorals, and these glistening dewdrops that he turned to pearls, which were his magic words when he remembered Warwickshire."

Chapter Two

SHAKESPEARE IN LONDON

Whether Shakespeare first stepped into London alone or in company has never been proved, though we may assume that a young man of his spirit would have been welcomed by any traveller tramping the same way. Many of his biographers like to describe his entry as friendless, but this, I think, is unfair to Richard Field, who worked in Blackfriars as a bookseller. He was not only a native of Stratford, but a fast friend of the poet, so what more likely than that Shakespeare sought out his shop upon arrival? Here he could get friendly advice from one who was of some importance in the City, for apart from selling books, Field printed and published them, and at the Signe of the White Greyhound he sold Shakespeare's first published work, *Venus and Adonis*, which was dedicated to the Earl of Southampton. It was customary to hang a sign outside every place of business and trade in Elizabethan days, and the White Greyhound was to be found in Paul's churchyard. One can picture the young poet's joy when he first picked it out from amongst its gaudily painted fellows, for beneath it he would meet the friend who could set his foot upon the first rung of his ambition's ladder. And how delighted the good Field must have been to hear the latest news of his home town from such a narrator. News exchanged, we can imagine the young Will pouring out his hopes and longings with that eloquence which was to make him famous. How could he get work in the theatre? A question easily answered by Field, who knew well the manager of The Theatre.

The Theatre owed this arrogant title to the fact of it having been the first of such buildings to exist in London. It had been erected by James Burbage, who also hailed from Warwickshire, so what more natural than that Field should pilot his friend along to Shoreditch thinking that this was the most likely manager to find some opening in theatrical life for a fellow countryman. The company of players then appearing under Burbage's direction were controlled under the patronage of the Earl of Leicester. Whether Burbage found Will a job at once or kept him waiting till some vacancy occurred, we cannot tell, but certain it is that eventually he enrolled him amongst the Leicester players. If

he had to wait for his enrolment, there may be truth in the legend that he earned money by holding horses outside the playhouse. Or perhaps the tradition that he started his career as a call-boy is true. He would naturally have preferred this office, since then his duties would be *inside* the theatre, where he could watch his skilled masters at work. But the office of prompter would have been more fitting for him, since he could then handle the script and watch the acting. Or did he fill in this possible time of waiting his chance with wilder adventures outside the world of Art? It was a time of national emergency, with Spain preparing her Invincible Fleet to attack our shores, and at least one Shakespearian critic, John Booth, puts forth the suggestion that the poet may have shipped aboard a London-found vessel in order to get the experience of fighting against the Armada. The London taverns would be full of sea-dogs looking for likely young men to man their ships. It was an age of high adventure, and who more loyal and adventurous than Shakespeare?

But this is all surmise. Let us follow Shakespeare to Shoreditch. On the way to THE Theatre, he would pass beyond the City wall through one of the gates, probably the Cripplegate, and then across the fields would get his first glimpse of a London playhouse. The first would be the newer rival of THE Theatre and called The Curtain. At the time of Shakespeare's interview with Burbage, these were the only two playhouses of which London could boast, for it was not until the following year that a third, named The Rose, was put up in Southwark.

The theatres of that day were more like our circuses than our present playhouses, for the actors had to play to an audience who were grouped all round them. Except for some set scenes revealed when curtains were drawn back on the upper or inner stage, they had no frame for their picture. The upper stage, or penthouse, masked the tiring-house, or dressing-rooms, from the audience. Beneath the penthouse properties could be arranged while the action of the play was taking place upon the apron stage, which jutted out into the middle of the "yarde" or floor space where we now have our stalls and pit. Here there were no seats, but people could watch the play, standing, for one penny. The seats were arranged in tiers, two or three, mounting to the roof. Part of the roof was open to the sky, so that plenty of light could shine down upon the spectacle. The theatres were therefore only open in the daytime, as they did not use artificial light. The stage was protected by thatch or tiles. Above the penthouse was a tower, which topped the highest tier, and from

the summit the trumpeters could be seen from outside the building blowing a fanfare to announce the play. There was also a flagstaff, with flag flying when a play was in progress. This tower could be utilized for battlement scenes, as in *Richard II* or *King John*, and there was a balcony under the roof of the penthouse for such scenes as the balcony outside Juliet's room, or for Jessica when she throws down the casket to Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*. "This is the penthouse under which Lorenzo desired us to make stand," says Gratiano. And again, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Borachio says to Conrad, his comrade in crime, "Stand thee close then under this penthouse, for it drizzles rain." The penthouse and balcony were made full use of by Shakespeare.

One of the evils of the Elizabethan theatre was the privilege extended to the gay gallants, who could hire stools and sit upon the stage itself in order to make themselves conspicuous to the rest of the audience. This practice continued into Restoration days but was at last most sensibly abolished. But even this must have improved the standard of acting. There is no better training for actors than the Elizabethan method. It makes them work the harder, for they have to create their atmosphere under the eyes of their patrons whom they can see in broad light all around them. Any artist who plays in this old style must find himself the more self-contained, and therefore the better able to hold his listeners. Today a black wall above the footlights cuts away the actor's vision of the audience, and has made the most of them object to seeing the faces of the front rows. But that sort of thing did not worry the Elizabethans. They had never experienced the black vague curtain of our fourth wall. Their first duty was to learn how to hold a very visible audience, who smoked, drank, cracked nuts as well as jokes, and without any division of floats or footlights, had to contend with a pit who jostled to support themselves by leaning their elbows upon the edge of the stage, behind the stools of the noblemen. These penny-ones of the "yarde" were known, not as the pittites, who are now most respectable, but the "groundlings", and the players who outheroded Herod, tried to calm them by splitting their ears, with sound and fury signifying nothing. We may be confident that Shakespeare soon learned that this was the wrong method, and that the "groundlings" had to be held by sheer power, poetry, and personality.

Till 1559 THE Theatre was the recognized home of the Leicester players, but they also gave seasons at the neighbouring Curtain,

and crossed the river to appear at The Rose, besides playing at the only performing place in the City itself, namely at The Crosskeys, in Gracechurch Street. No doubt the conditions there would have been much the same as at The Old George, in Southwark, where the actors played to the galleries of the inn itself, spacious balconies which served as covered passages outside the various rooms, and looking down upon the cobbled courtyard, where platforms raised upon wagons served for the stage.

In these places Shakespeare learned his business as an actor until he was important enough in the company to join forces with six others in an adventurous enterprise which was to give England perhaps the most famous theatre in the history of the stage.

Having crossed the Thames to play seasons at The Rose, and evidently finding that neighbourhood better for business, THE Theatre company hit upon a bold plan to improve their state. They resolved to move their theatre to Bankside, in Southwark. To save the cost of material required, they demolished carefully the oldest playhouse of London, so that they could use the valuable timbers in the erection of their newly planned home. Since there was no longer any point in the old proud title of THE Theatre, they called their new one The Globe, and adopted as their sign the figure of Atlas holding up the world, a prophetic emblem of what Shakespeare was about to do in upholding the theatrical world for all time. We can imagine the care with which the old timbers were removed and stacked, till they were placed on log-wagons and drawn by horse-teams south over old London Bridge. No doubt the valiant seven accompanied the procession, and since the players themselves would be well known to the shopkeepers on the Bridge, the cry would have gone echoing into Southwark: *The actors are come hither.*

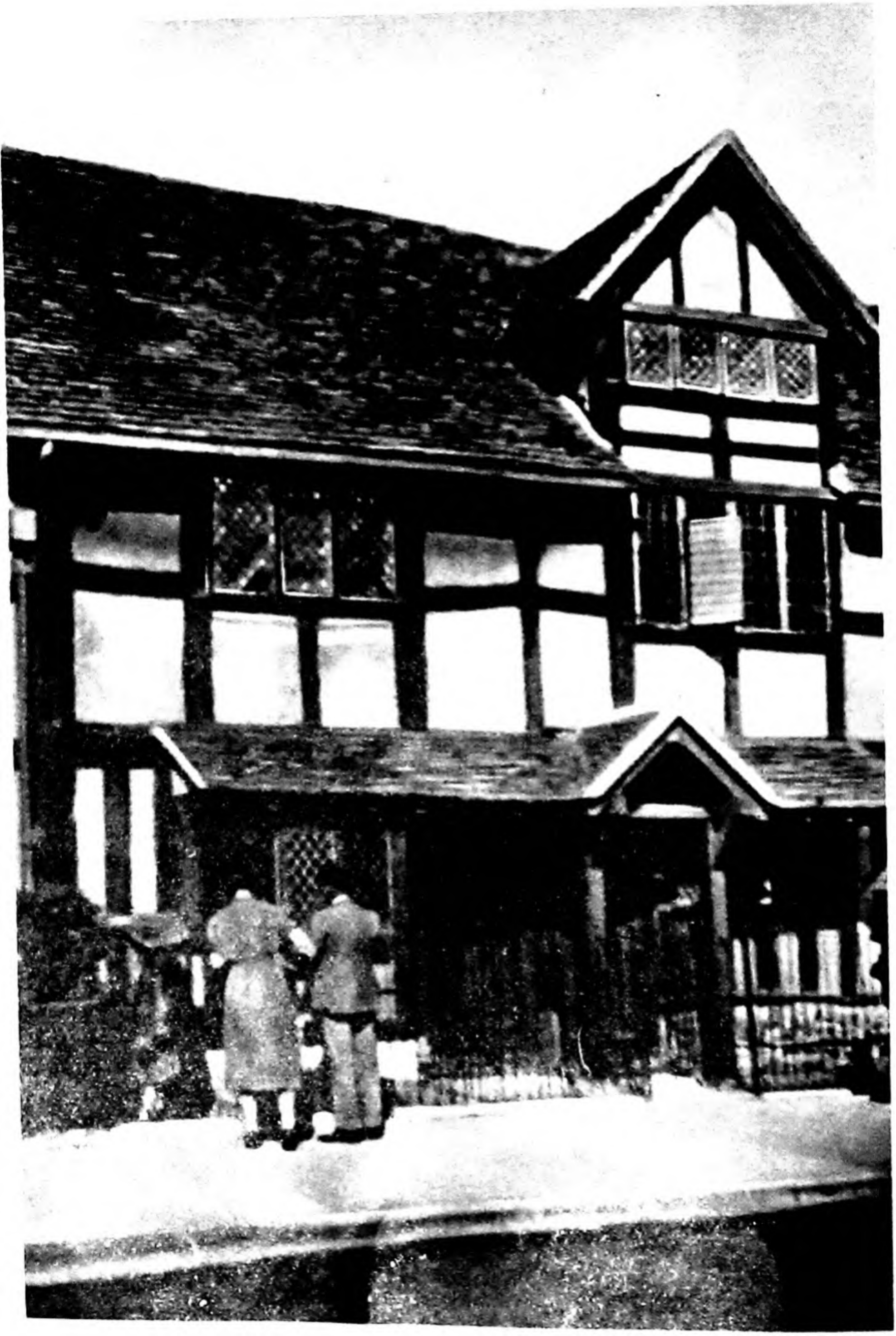
How thrilled the actors must have been as they watched the timbers and planks of "*this wooden O*" growing higher and higher till the stage roof was thatched, called "the heavens", and the tower behind it rising higher towards the real heavens of the sky. And below, undisturbed by the hammering of the carpenters, no doubt Shakespeare sat with his tables on his knee and inkhorn by his side, working up the scenes of his new historical drama with which the Globe was to open, *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*, which was also given the title of *The Cronicle History of Henry the fift with his battell fought at Agin Court in France.*

Togither with Auntient Pistoll. Queer spelling, and a spot of publicity for the comedian who played Pistol. The site of The Globe was upon that of an old cockpit, and one may be sure that Shakespeare was interrupted a good deal by his many friends dropping in to see how the cockpit was getting on. This furnishes the reason for the poet asking in the mouth of the first chorus to *Henry V* the question:

> Can this cockpit hold
> The vasty fields of France? or may we cram
> Within this wooden O the very casques
> That did affright the air at Agincourt?

Among those interested would have been the bookseller Field and Edward Alleyn, who shared with Richard Burbage the leading parts in the Shakespeare plays. Also it is known that Robert Harvard, father of the founder of the great American University, was very much associated with the Southwark Players, and since his wife was Katharine Rogers of Stratford-on-Avon, it may be assumed that Shakespeare had known Harvard when at home. Their famous son John was born in Southwark and baptized in St. Saviour's, the parish church of those days which we now know as Southwark Cathedral. Since Shakespeare did not retire from London till 1611, and John Harvard was christened in 1607, he would have known him as a small child. On several occasions I have had the privilege of playing Shakesperian parts in Harvard University, and it was a wonderful experience when one thought that these plays were seen by the Founder's father when they were first played in Southwark. One felt that Shakespeare was pleased that his plays were performed in the oldest American College because he had known and loved the Harvards. I never realized till I went to Harvard that its town was called Cambridge because John Harvard had been to Emmanuel, Cambridge. Robert Harvard was a brother vestryman in Southwark to Philip Henslowe, who was an official of the parish church, and a great friend of Shakespeare's. A very practical friend too, since he was the banker to his company at The Globe, and whenever one of the actors was attached for debt and put into prison Henslowe would fetch the fellow out in order that he might take his part at the next performance. Henslowe's stepdaughter married Edward Alleyn, whom Ben Jonson called "the best of actors and the most worthy famous Master Alleyn".

THE SPIRIT OF SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND.
RICHARD COEUR DE LION AT WESTMINSTER



SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH-PLACE, STRATFORD-ON-AVON

Alleyn shared with Henslowe the honour of being Master of the King's games of bears, bulls and dogs. He must have been a dashing player of the heroic type, since he was brave enough to direct the baitings personally, and Stow describes in his chronicles an occasion when James I visited the Tower, and Alleyn actually baited one of the lions that were kept there. A versatile actor. With Henslowe too he was a warden of St. Saviour's, and in after years he closely resembled John Harvard, for he too founded a college that was to become famous at Dulwich. It is said that being without children and wondering how to dispose of the Manor he had purchased in Dulwich, he endowed it and built it for a place of learning for other people's children who would perhaps think on him with a blessing. There is a very beautiful memorial window to him in Southwark Cathedral showing him reading his charter before Lord Bacon, Inigo Jones, and other notables of the time.

So we can well say that Shakespeare is connected through his friends with both Harvard and Dulwich.

Alleyn lodged at Bankside, near the theatre, and "over against the Clink". Just south of The Globe was the Bear Garden to which Londoners crowded to see the baitings, after which they would retire to the adjacent Tabard Inn for refreshment. This "gentle hostelrye" had already been made famous by Chaucer, who wrote of it first hand in his prelude to the *Canterbury Tales*. Here the pilgrims collected before setting off to the shrine of St. Thomas, and were welcomed by that "right mery man" mine host. Of this the poet wrote:

> Bifel that in that sesoun on a day,
> In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
> Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
> To Canterbury with ful devout corage,
> At night was come in-to that hostelrye
> Well nyne and twenty in a compaignye.

And of mine host he adds:

> A large man he was with eyen stepe.
> A fairer burgeys is there none in Chepe.

Chaucer has been given the title of Father of Poetry, but Dr. Johnson, himself a resident of Southwark, claims the priority for Chaucer's master, Sir John Gower, also of Southwark, when he says, in his history of the English Language, that the first of

our authors who can properly be said to have written English was he when writing in the Priory Church.

Chaucer was certainly Gower's disciple, and these two started that long chain of association that has since existed between famous English men of letters and St. Saviour's, Southwark. Dramatists and actors made it their spiritual home in Shakespeare's day and held office in the church. Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, also Alleyn and Philip Henslowe. It is good today to walk the aisles which we know Shakespeare trod, and to look at the memorial windows lovingly dedicated to writings of so many great authors connected with Southwark. Besides Gower and Chaucer, and the Elizabethans, we can look at the window to John Bunyan, who, before writing *The Pilgrim's Progress*, preached to crowded congregations at a Meeting House known as The Zoar Chapel, situated in Southwark Street. For these sermons he was thrown into prison, and so, deprived of the right to help people by preaching, he took to his pen and gave Christianity for all time one of the great gems of religious writing. Besides the Bible, this humble tinker of Bedford loved one other book, which was Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, and from his knowledge of these two works the prisoner let his imagination work.

Other great authors commemorated in the nave windows are those to Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and Alexander Cruden.

Doctor Johnson was a guest of Thrale, who was a brewer in Southwark. It was in their comfortable home on Bankside that Thrale's wife was able, according to Boswell, to bring the best out of the Doctor in conversation. In the window you will see a picture of the Judgement of Christ before Pontius Pilate, who is asking, "What is truth?" The choice of this subject has been explained by Horace Munroe, the sub-Dean of the cathedral. The Doctor had a very strict regard for truth, and Mrs. Thrale, encouraging him to speak upon his pet subject, remarked that "little variations in narrative must happen a thousand times a day if one is not perpetually watching". To which the Doctor answered, "Well, madam, and you ought to be perpetually watching. It is more from carelessness about truth than from intentional lying that there is so much falsehood in the world."

Like all the great writers who came after Shakespeare, Oliver Goldsmith owed much to the National Poet, and his association with Southwark was by reason of his determination to be a "Good Natured Man". This "Immortal Oddity", as he has been

called by reason of his early pranks and misdemeanours, for he was seldom out of trouble and disgrace, for his good-natured joking has, apart from his other good works, the credit of having given to our language a perfect poem, novel, and play. *The Deserted Village* as a poem, *The Vicar of Wakefield* as a novel, and perhaps the best comedy ever written—*She Stoops to Conquer*—will carry his fame for all time. The long tour which he took through Europe on foot without money, and entirely dependent on other people's good nature being attracted to his own, had a curious effect upon this great oddity, for it robbed him of his good high spirits and gave him in exchange a spirit of utter gloom. But this depression was to benefit Southwark with his presence, for in order to bring about social reform amongst the poor he gave up his time to practising medicine amongst them, though, sad to relate, the hopelessness of being able to do much to better their conditions only drove this good-natured saint into greater depths of depression. However, as I gazed at his window one day, the sorrow I felt for what he considered his failure was eclipsed by the laughing pranks of his glorious clown, Tony Lumpkin.

Alexander Cruden was like Goldsmith, in that he was a disappointed man. But he was disappointed in love, and in order to forget the torture of mind which the lady in question had imposed upon him he bent all his energies into the gigantic work of making a Concordance of the Bible. He is buried somewhere in the vicinity of the cathedral, and so was one of many who became famous for Biblical authorship, for Southwark old parish church, in which our Shakespeare had so often heard the Bible read, will be for ever associated with the growth of the English version of the Scriptures.

Wycliffe owed much to John Gower, of Southwark, when he made his translation of the Bible to the mother tongue. Later William Tyndale underwent exile and finally martyrdom for his urge to place an English Bible for all eyes to read, and with this work unfulfilled his last prayer was that God would open the eyes of King Henry VIII. Within a year of his death, it was from a Southwark man that his prayer was answered. One James Nicholson, who was a maker of stained glass who obtained the Royal Licence to print the Bible from St. Thomas' Hospital, of Southwark. Bishop Andrewes, buried in Southwark, was the leading translator of the Authorized Version. He died in Winchester House, the palace which in Shakespeare's day was but a stone's throw from The Globe Theatre, facing the river on Bank-

side. So Cruden takes his place in this romantic church amongst the other men of letters for having standardized the most useful book of reference ever written.

While on the subject of Southwark's association with the English version of the Bible one must not forget to pay tribute to a figure in the screen of John Rogers, the first to suffer martyrdom in Mary's reign. He was a chaplain to the English trading in Antwerp, and was much influenced by the above-mentioned William Tyndale. He carried on Tyndale's work, and published a complete English Bible in Antwerp. He came home to the appointment of Prebendary of St. Paul's, but was sent to Newgate Prison for preaching a sermon at Paul's Cross praising the true doctrine taught in Edward's reign. He was actually tried for heresy in the Retro Choir of Southwark, and condemned from there to the local Clink Prison, from which he was dragged to execution at Smithfield. It is recorded that a Royal Box was erected and draped in crimson so that the Queen's husband, King Philip of Spain, could witness the burning of the heretic. To the great crowds that came to see him suffer he remarked: "Good people, I have taught you nothing but God's holy word, and I am come hither to seal my faith with my blood."

It was certainly an inspiration to place behind the recumbent figure of Shakespeare in his memorial at Southwark a background of the Southwark that he knew. On the near side, or Bankside, there stands out The Globe Theatre in which his best work was done as dramatist. Then Winchester House, St. Saviour's Church, and the clustered buildings upon London Bridge. And across the river the Tower and old St. Paul's stand out conspicuously. In his day what a panorama of buildings he must have seen every time he went to The Globe for his work. Some of them still exist, but, alas, many have gone to give place to houses of commerce, and many were destroyed by the Great Fire in 1666. Many of the buildings, however, in the poet's day served as scenes for his plays. From the tower of his theatre he could see the Tower, Baynard's Castle, Bridewell Palace, the Temple, the Palaces of Savoy, Whitehall, and Westminster. Of Southwark he has one scene, and that in the *Second Part* of *King Henry VI.* Jack Cade and his rabblement have carried the heads of Lord Say and his son-in-law, Sir James Cromer, from Smithfield on poles, making them kiss at every corner, till Cade orders his followers to go "*Up Fish Street: down St. Magnus' Corner, kill and knock down: throw them into Thames.*" When the crowd turn from him through the exhortations of Buckingham and

Clifford and cry "*God save the King*", Cade asks in bitter rage: "Hath my sword therefore broke through London Gates, that you should leave me at the WHITE HART in SOUTHWARK?" Such a topical allusion must have delighted the locals.

No doubt Shakespeare's most moving moment in St Saviour's was on that New Year's Eve when he looked down into his brother's grave in the choir, and no doubt saw the entry in the parish register:

> 1607 December 31st. Edmund Shakespeare, a player, buried in ye church with a forenoon knell of the great bell.

Southwark is very different today from what it was in Shakespeare's time. Winchester House is no more. Gone too are the theatres and the inns. The nearest to The Globe, if any of the players wished to have a quick one, would have been The Falcon, along the river bank to the left, or The Tabard. But the old George Inn still remains, tucked inside a railway yard, and here you can still sit beneath old beams and be served with a hot dinner and a tankard of the best while trying to put yourself back into Elizabethan days, and picturing Shakespeare, armed with notebook and a good memory (since that was the first requirement of the actor in his day), setting forth from Southwark, crossing London Bridge and wandering about the famous spots of London history in which he planned to bring his characters to life upon The Globe boards.

These scenes are many, and are to be found in the histories, or chronicle plays, and we shall deal with these in the next chapter. They number in all eighty-nine scenes, and the palaces and great houses of the London of that age are nearly all included. Streets, market-places and yards are also named. It has been said that the author played some kingly parts in sport, which seems to indicate that he included himself in the casts of the histories. He was said to be excellent in his quality as an actor, and he once gained a notice that he "did act exceedingly well". But there seem to be only two parts which most people agree that he did in truth play. One was old Adam in *As You Like It*, and the other the ghost in *Hamlet*.

Now there is a cryptic question that is still used amongst our modern actors, and is asked on Friday nights. Friday night is actors' pay night, when the manager walks round the dressing-rooms with the ever-welcome envelopes, containing either cash or cheque. I have asked many old actors if they could explain

why actors never say, "Has he come round yet with the doings?" Perhaps some do, but certainly not those who respect the tradition of the Stage. They ask, "*Has the ghost walked?*" Now why on earth should the manager be called *the ghost*? I like to think that I have hit upon the truth of this tradition. Shakespeare played the ghost. The character appears in the first act of the play and then has a very long wait before appearing in the Queen's Closet Scene. Did Shakespeare arrange this wait for his convenience both as actor and manager. Did he purposely give himself time to go round to the box-office, count up the house and the money, and carry back each actor's share? If so, since he was supposed to be a better actor in elderly parts, might he not also have arranged the part of old Aegeon in the *Comedy of Errors* to like purpose? And perhaps Egeus too in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Both these old men have very long waits. In *As You Like It* he does not bring back Adam at the end of the play. Perhaps he could not be bothered to come back just to walk on. It is certainly a theory worth thinking about, and would explain that anxious question handed down to us from the past, "*Has the ghost walked?*"

I like to think of Shakespeare, "armed at points" and with "his beaver up", so that his colleagues could see his smile (and we hope there was money enough to warrant the smile) as he handed out to each one his share of the "takings".

There is another queer stage tradition connected with Shakespeare. Anyone who has acted in his plays will be most particular about it too. *You must never quote lines from "Macbeth" in a theatre dressing-room.* If any ignorant one so transgresses, he must at once go outside the door and, knocking, ask if he may come in. Perhaps this arose because *Macbeth* is a play based on superstition and witchcraft. It is any way supposed to be an "unlucky play", which is a pity, as it is certainly one of the best. The fight at the end is very often disastrous, and generally to the Macbeth who, having worked so hard all through the performance, has to meet Macduff, who in comparison is fresh. I have seen three Macbeths have their heads cloven with their antagonists' swords. Once, however, I saw the tables turned in a somewhat comical manner. The star playing Macbeth had been taken ill suddenly and the understudy was put on. He had in his day been quite a famous Macbeth and the fact that he had another chance to appear in it in the West End was almost too much for him. He beamed through the horrors, as though he were saying to the audience, "If you aren't enjoying it, I am." His voice got stronger

with every scene. He gathered freshness from every exertion. By the time he reached the big fight at the end he was fresher than ever. The Macduff, and certainly the best Macduff I ever wish to see, was Basil Gill. One of the finest people to act with too. Always thinking of others, he was very careful about stage fights, because he was shortsighted without his glasses. Therefore so long as the Macbeth fought as rehearsed, Macduff's sword was always in the right position. But when the rehearsed fight should have ended with a knock-out for Macbeth, the understudy found, much to his disappointment, that his part was over, and he desperately wanted to go on acting. So up he sprang from the ground and continued the attack, and so fiercely that Basil Gill had to defend himself for his life. And the joyous Macbeth fought on, thoroughly enjoying himself. At last Basil Gill managed to get to grips, and whispered into his antagonist's ear, "I say, old man, I suppose you know that I am supposed to win this fight." Then, and then only, did Macbeth give up the ghost.

Macbeth is a violent play with dark scenes and flashing daggers, so it is natural that a lot of real blood has been shed over it. Personally, I think if Shakespeare ever wrote an unlucky play it was *Henry VIII*, for it was that play which burnt down The Globe Theatre, in which no doubt the Shakespeare manuscripts were destroyed. That was the most unlucky incident in the history of the stage. And yet, strangely enough, since that disaster this play has been one of the luckiest. As a play it is not good, though it has fine scenes in it and splendid pageantry, but it does make money and has enjoyed long runs.

It is strange that in all the time Shakespeare was a well-known figure in London there should be only one incident written down about him. Whether this is an exaggeration or no we cannot tell. If there were not some truth in it, it is unlikely that a barrister-at-law would have troubled to enter it in his diary. The entry is made in the year 1601, and the diarist is one John Manningham. It is but a racy piece of gossip, giving a popular author and actor-manager credit for scoring off his leading player.

The story runs that a certain dame of the City went to see Richard Burbage play the part of King Richard III, and fell so much in love with him that she suggested an assignation for the evening. The arrangement for meeting was overheard by Shakespeare, who not only forestalled Burbage by reaching the Dame's house before the other arrived, but by his winning charms

being most lovingly entertained by the lady. Presently, however, one of her servants brought up the message that "Richard III was at the door". Shakespeare bade the servant tell the visitor that "William the Conqueror was before Richard III".

There must have been many others who had kept diaries of that time, and having passed them on to their children and children's children were eventually swept away in the Great Fire. Otherwise we might still be unearthing other anecdotes connected with Shakespeare and his fellow players. That he was popular amongst them is certain. John Heminge and Henry Condell, to whom Shakespeare left money to buy them memorial rings, had been his fellow actors and good friends. In their Folio Edition of his plays, which they dedicated to the Earl of Pembroke, who was Chamberlain to King James I, and to his brother the Earl of Montgomery, who were both great admirers of the playwright, they said: "We have but collected them and done an office to the dead, to procure his orphans guardians; without ambition either of self-profit or fame; only to keep the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive as was our Shakespeare."

"I loved the man," wrote Ben Jonson, "and do honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions; wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped." He speaks too of his facile pen that followed his imagination with such certainty that "he never blotted a line". (By which he means blotted or crossed out.)

John Webster the dramatist talks of Shakespeare's "right happy and copious industry".

I always think that these tributes prove that Shakespeare did write the plays. *Honest. Open and free nature. Excellent phantasy.* How could he then have been such a charlatan as to be praised for work he did not do? Had he been of such a nature would such tributes have been spoken of him by discerning men?

Again: *Gentle Shakespeare. Sweet Swan of Avon. My Beloved.* Such sayings will not do as the epitaph of a fraud.

As the family motto, *Nons Sans Droict*, was given by Royal Consent, so the translation puts the seal to his work. And all the praises he has had are NOT WITHOUT RIGHT.

Chapter Three

LONDON SCENES IN HIS PLAYS

In *King John* there are no London scenes, but the opening of the next play in historical sequence, *King Richard II*, is generally accepted as taking place in the capital. The controversy over this Room in the Palace has arisen from the accounts of the quarrel between Henry of Hereford and Thomas Mowbray, given by Holinshed, who opens the quarrel in a parliament "Holden at Shrewsbury" and continued in the King's hearing six weeks later by appointment at Windsor. In some editions of the play Windsor. A Room in the Palace, is used, but the word Palace, rather than Castle, suggests the Old Palace of Westminster. Since it was a matter touching two of the highest nobles in the land, and one of them being the King's cousin, the hearing would have been held in some private room, and not before Commoners in Westminster Hall, who might have attended as representatives of the people. At this second meeting, wherever it was held, the King tried to make peace between the powerful antagonists, but when the Duke of Hereford cast down his gage and the Duke of Norfolk took it up he gave up further attempt as a peacemaker and appointed them to meet "at Coventry upon St. Lambert's Day", and there in the Lists settle the "swelling difference of their settled hate", in mortal combat with lance and sword. When this play was produced at His Majesty's Theatre, Beerbohm Tree took advantage of the controversy as to where the quarrel before the King took place by ignoring the Room in the Palace, and placing it in the King's Garden upon the Bowling Green. In a production that was otherwise carried out with the greatest faith for historical accuracy, when every detail of the heraldic splendour was supervised by the York Herald himself, and the costumes and stage trappings were copied from the illuminated chronicles of the reign, this one liberty can well be pardoned for the magic effect it had upon the story. Surrounded by his sycophants, those "three caterpillars of the commonwealth", Bushy, Bagot, and Green, the pleasure-loving King is interrupted by the grave entry of his uncle, Old John of Gaunt, just as he is enjoying a game of bowls with his favourites. To be forced through fear of his uncle's power to postpone his pleasure in order to deal with

an affair of such high moment gave Tree as the King a splendid opening to show a petulant irritation at the whole business, and his effeminate exquisiteness in dress and manner made a grand contrast to the learned gravity of Gaunt and the warlike bearing of both Hereford and Norfolk. It struck just the right note at the very opening of the play to put the audience into the very essence of the argument that was to be the object of the play.

The next scene is very definitely LONDON, and styled A ROOM IN THE DUKE OF LANCASTER'S PALACE. In Shakespeare's day, this considerable building with its stone towers and watergates, standing on the water edge of Thames Strand, was known as THE HOSPITAL OF THE SAVOY. It was endowed as a hospital by Henry VII. Before that it was called THE SAVOY PALACE.

The name Savoy exists today in Savoy Hill, the Savoy Theatre, the Savoy Hotel, and the Savoy Chapel, but nothing is left otherwise of the grand building which was anciently the seat of Peter, Earl of Savoy, whose niece, Eleanor, became queen to King Henry III. This queen inheriting it on her uncle's death gave it to her second son, Edmund, who afterwards became Earl of Lancaster. Thus it became the property of the earldom, and as Lancaster Castle was the family stronghold in the North, so the Savoy became the London residence of House and Honour of the Duchy. It came to John of Gaunt through his wife Blanch, who was the daughter of Henry, the First Duke of Lancaster, and was co-heiress with her sister Matilda, on whose death Gaunt inherited by virtue of his wife, and was created, himself, the Duke of Lancaster. The wealth of this vast estate, his wisdom in government, his prowess as a soldier, his royal descent, being son to the mighty Edward, and a loyal lover of England, gave the great Duke enormous power. Had his brother the Black Prince lived to be crowned he would have served under a King after his own heart, which was broken by the arrogant behaviour of his nephew Richard.

In this scene at the Savoy we witness the farewell to his widowed sister-in-law, the Duchess of Gloster, when Lancaster departs for Coventry to attend the Lists in which his son is to fight for honour and life.

Although Froissart maintains that Henry of Hereford said his final farewell to his cousin Richard at the Palace of Eltham, it is safe to say that the fourth scene of the first act of this play is Shakespeare's third London scene, and that the Duke of Aumerle, son of the Duke of York, who had acted as High Constable in the Lists at Coventry, came to the King to describe

Hereford's departure in a room of the Palace of Westminster, for at the close of the scene Bushy enters with the news that John of Gaunt is dying at Ely House, and entreats his royal nephew to visit him immediately.

Had Richard been at Eltham, Shakespeare would have made him order horses, but instead he causes the King to say casually:

> Come, gentlemen, let's all go visit him:
> Pray God we may make haste, and come too late.

To which his favourites return a jocular "AMEN".

WESTMINSTER PALACE was the original royal residence of King Edward the Confessor, and its buildings surrounded the Old Yard. The New Palace Yard dates from the building of Westminster Hall by William II. But the Hall we know today was built by Richard II from the exactions which he levied, and, by the irony of Fate, the first full Parliament that was summoned there were met to proceed to the King's deposition. In the buildings surrounding the Yard were the Royal Apartments, with a tower on the North End erected by Edward I, and there was a great gateway on the south-west leading to St. Margaret's Lane, and another gate, rebuilt by Richard III, upon the west. There is no doubt but that the royal family preferred the Palace of Westminster to the gloomy confines of the London Tower.

ELY HOUSE is the next London scene, and in the mouth of the dying Gaunt, Shakespeare utters his own love of England, and pays a poet's tribute to the Royal House.

> This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden, demi-paradise,
> This fortress built by Nature for herself
> Against infection and the hand of war,
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
> This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
> This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings:
> This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land:
> England bound in with the triumphant sea
> Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
> Of watery Neptune.

In the previous scene Richard has been told that Gaunt has been suddenly taken sick, and the King discovers him at Ely

House lying upon a couch, from which he is carried off to bed. This explains the reason that he is not at the Savoy Palace. No doubt he went to visit the Bishop of Ely and was suddenly stricken. Ely Place is mentioned also in *Richard III* when the Duke of Gloster tells the Bishop that when he was last in Holborn he saw good strawberries in his garden there, and asks him to send for some. No doubt Richard wished to remove this spiritual Lord from the room when he was about to order the instant death of Hastings. The Bishop, however, merely sends a servant to Holborn and returns. Like Crosby Place, which was sometimes called Crosby House, so Ely House was sometimes Ely Place, and it was surrounded by fields and gardens which were famed for their strawberry beds. The fruit was popular even in those days in London. In Sir Thomas More's *Historical Illustration* the story of the Ely Place strawberries is reported, so there is no doubt that Shakespeare also had it from reliable sources.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE, is the next scene and takes us back to Westminster, and then a whole act takes place elsewhere in order to give in turn the whole of the fourth act to the Deposition of the King in LONDON. WESTMINSTER HALL.

This is the only scene in the act, as though Shakespeare felt that this jewel of the play must be in a setting alone. According to Holinshed and Froissart the Deposition actually occurred in the chief chamber of the King in the Tower, to which Richard had been escorted after having been lodged in Westminster.

From the stage point of view Westminster Hall is a better setting, since the central figure is not only facing the usurper and his Peers, but the Commons as well. The Lords Spiritual on the right side of the throne: the Lords Temporal on the left: the Commons below. Also for dramatic purpose the actual mounting to the throne, before Parliament, of Lancaster, gives greater moment to the objection of the Bishop of Carlisle. In the Great White Tower of the Tower of London the ceremony would have been more intimate, and Shakespeare uses the larger canvas of Westminster Hall because he was a dramatist before a historian. Also he takes the liberty of opening the scene with Aumerle's rage against Bagot and Fitzwater, which event really happened after Lancaster was crowned. Also most authorities place the Bishop's protest after the Deposition. But here again Shakespeare saw the advantage to his drama, in placing it before Richard's entrance to the Hall. It has been said that when Richard resigned he did so with a merry countenance, which his enemies maintained was to hide his fear of death. Yet Richard

had a desperate bravery of his own, and if he indeed showed a merry countenance, was it not that he could appreciate his own griefs with a self-pitying enjoyment? In the play he certainly steals the thunder from his cousin. It is his scene, and Shakespeare lets him take full advantage of it. Unable to compare favourably with the warlike strength of Henry, he goes the other way to work. He lays a flattering unction to his soul by likening himself to Christ. He regards his sometime followers ranged against him, and likens them to Judas. Later he accuses some of them of being Pilates: of washing their hands and then delivering him to his sour cross. Although he included others, he was in reality accusing his cousin of being not only Judas but Pilate too, which at least made Henry sufficiently uncomfortable in conscience to make him humbly courteous to Richard till he withdrew to the Tower.

When I was first called upon to play the part of Richard at the Old Vic, I went to the then Dean of Westminster, asking for his help and advice. He showed me the famous picture of Richard on his throne, which hung above a doorway in the Deanery Hall. It is a small edition, said to be the work of the same master, of the large portrait that hangs in the Abbey, which during the war had been hidden away for safety. As the Dean talked about the picture, he said: "I think there was only one that poor Richard admired more than himself, and that was Christ." He advised me to have a wig made exactly like the hair in the picture, but to have another longer one for the Westminster Hall scene, and to make the beard fuller and longer too, so that the character might look more Christ-like than in the preceding scenes. He also advised the wearing of a voluminous black velvet cloak, to be thrown away on the line about "the sour cross", revealing beneath a long white tunic. He further directed that the arms, on releasing the cloak, should be outstretched as though upon the cross, in order that the audience might see as well as hear the King's symbolism.

LONDON. A STREET LEADING TO THE TOWER.

There is no indication as to which street this would be, except that it is somewhere on the way between Westminster and the Tower. Since the Queen is waiting for him, and seemingly certain that he will pass "this way", she would probably have taken her stand at the corner of the Minories, which led directly to "Julius Caesar's ill-erected tower", as she calls it. (This is, of course, no criticism against the architecture, but meaning "erected

for ill".) Since Northumberland arrives to say that the mind of Bolingbroke is changed and that Richard must proceed to Pomfret rather than to the Tower, it is obvious that Shakespeare means this opening scene of his fifth act to follow immediately the Deposition. Having announced in the Hall that the Lords should prepare themselves against his coronation upon the next Wednesday, Henry thought it best to remove Richard at once from London. Richard's poetical farewell to his Queen, contrasted with his haughty scorn of Northumberland, makes this little scene one of the gems with which this play of such sad beauty is so rich. The scene following contains another of such gems.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE DUKE OF YORK'S PALACE.

Although this Duke of York lived mostly on his estate at Langley, some twenty miles from London, in Hertfordshire, the crisis of the Deposition necessitated him being in his London residence. The chief value of this spirited scene, in which York discovers that Aumerle, his son, is implicated in the plot against the King at Oxford, lies in the description of the Duke to the Duchess of the two cousins, Henry and Richard, riding into London. Of this passage Dryden wrote: "The painting of this description is so lively and the words so moving, that I have scarce read anything comparable to it in any other language."

This is a grand example of the Elizabethan method of describing what could not be put upon the stage.

In Tree's production, this description was actually seen in a vast moving tableau, in which real horses were used, as they were also in the Lists of Coventry. But living animals other than human beings are nearly always a distraction to an audience, who, gaping with surprise at a real cow, horse or elephant, are apt to miss some necessary question of the play which they ought to be considering. Could we put back the centuries and actually witness the real event of that tragic entry into London, I think we should not be more moved than we are when reading or hearing York's description. We should be seeing it for ourselves, certainly, but not through the wizardry of Shakespeare's words.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

So starts the *First Part* of *King Henry IV*, and the palace is again Westminster, in which the King talks to Westmoreland about Henry Percy, the famed Hotspur, comparing his chivalry

with the riotous living of his own son, Henry, Prince of Wales. In the last act of the preceding play, the King, although disparaging Prince Hal, had expressed hopes for his reformation in the future. In this scene, however, he envies Northumberland his son, and wishes that Hotspur had been born his Harry instead of the Prince.

LONDON. ANOTHER ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This is the next scene, for London embraces the first act.

ANOTHER ROOM.

But what a room, since in it John Falstaff is first introduced to the world that will for ever marvel at his rogueries. The first appearance too of Hal. But even this famed Prince of Wales, this hero of Agincourt, pales almost to insignificance beside the monstrous figure of the fat knight. Even Queen Elizabeth gloried in him, which is one very good reason for calling her Good Queen Bess.

LONDON. ANOTHER ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Probably the same room again as the first scene. Here, Hotspur, a diminutive part in *Richard II*, comes into his own in grand style. Hotspur, Hal, and Falstaff. What a grand trio to be found in one play, whose greatest scene is the fourth of the next act.

EASTCHEAP. A ROOM IN THE BOAR'S HEAD TAVERN.

The whole of this scene is Shakespeare at his very best. He is writing of a side of London life which he well knew. In his day the best taverns of London were literary clubs. Here the great writers and players congregated to exchange views while they took their ease at their inn. Here too they rubbed shoulders with noblemen, who were interested as patrons of theatres. Into these same taverns there would also come the gentlemen adventurers from overseas, when their ships were unloading from the Thames. Tales of personal adventures in the Indies and the Spanish Main bandied from the mouths of our pioneer explorers, whose dream was to make our Empire equal to that of Spain, were jotted down in the notebooks of the dramatists. Apart from The Tabard in Southwark, the most distinguished men of letters gathered for "copy" at THE MERMAID and THE BOAR'S HEAD. The first named stood in Bread Street, Cheapside, and

the second was by London Bridge. Actually the building which Shakespeare knew as THE BOAR'S HEAD was destroyed in the Great Fire, but was re-erected from the ruins, and no doubt was a faithful copy of the original, with as much of the materials, such as heavy beams and stone, as it was possible to use. The patrons who had loved the old inn would be better pleased if the new one resembled it, so that its old tradition and associations could be preserved. Goldsmith gives us reason to think this, when he writes in his Essays of a visit to Shakespeare's BOAR'S HEAD, "still kept at Eastcheap". He records how he sat by a pleasant fire, *in the very room* in which Sir John Falstaff cracked his jokes. He also boasts that he sat in the *very chair* so often honoured by Prince Hal, and polluted by his immoral but merry companions. No doubt the chair in question would have been one of the first relics to be saved when the landlord at the time of the Great Fire saw that his house was doomed. Goldsmith describes the room as having an oak floor, Gothic windows and a *ponderous chimney-piece*. No landlord with an eye to business would have wished the character of this, certainly the best room in the house, to be altered, and most probably the stonework would have withstood the fire, in which case the restoration would have been simple. It takes a lot of very fierce fire to bite into the great beams of those days. Ship's timber seasoned as hard as iron. I am writing now on a heavy table made of Tudor oak. It was part of a beam belonging to a barn in the old Palace of Wrotham. After two days of burning, there was only a thin crust of charred wood on the outside which when scraped off showed perfect oak beneath. So hard too that several sawblades were broken in the cutting of it. Therefore at THE BOAR'S HEAD much of the wood may have remained. What happened to the chair in which the Prince and Goldsmith sat I have no idea, but it must have passed into other hands when the second BOAR'S HEAD was demolished. This calamity occurred as late as 1831, when the new London Bridge was completed, and the old one which had lasted through battles, floods and fire for six hundred and twenty-two years had to give way to its successor built a hundred and eighty yards on its west. With the demolishment of the old bridge, which was necessary for river traffic, went also the second BOAR'S HEAD. No doubt this was necessary too for the more valuable building sites in the vicinity of the new bridge, but what a relic of London it would be today.

I remember some years ago hearing of a curious relic of the original BOAR'S HEAD. It was told to me when I was playing

Falstaff in this play at the Old Vic by a member of the audience who was a London County Council schoolmaster and a keen antiquarian. He related how in Whitechapel years ago there was a hillock called The Mount which tradition said was composed of the rubbish carted away after the Great Fire. When this was eventually cleared away there came to light an oak carving of a boar's head surrounded by a frame of two real tusks with a ring at the top for hooking it up. On the back there was a date, 1568, and a name which, according to the records of that time, was the name of the then landlord of the old Boar's Head. Perhaps it was made by some artisan who loved the inn, or who presented it to the landlord in lieu of chalked-up refreshment.

THE BOAR'S HEAD TAVERN appears once more in this play and once in the second part of *Henry IV*. They are all grand scenes, though the first of them eclipses any comedy scene ever put upon a stage. In one scene, to hear Falstaff's story of the men in buckram suits, and then to hear him imitating first King Henry and then Prince Hal, is full measure indeed.

The next act has for its second scene the Westminster Palace again.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This is a spirited scene between the King and the Prince which paves the way for Henry's subsequent greatness. It is followed by THE BOAR'S HEAD TAVERN.

This scene shows us that Falstaff was loved by the people around him as much as by the audiences who see him on the stage. In his venomous attack upon Bardolph, the Hostess and the Prince, he is eventually forgiven. When he departs for the wars it is the Prince whom he has slandered that procures him a charge of regiment of Foot. It is the Hostess who allows herself to be pacified sufficiently to make his breakfast after he has accused her wrongfully of picking his pocket when all the time it was the Prince, who did it for a jest when he fell asleep hiding behind the arras. And who so sad as Dame Quickly when he departs for the wars later? And who so stricken with grief at his ultimate death as Bardolph, Pistol, Nym, and again the Hostess? And the glorious accusation of theft as extravagent as his tale of the men in buckram. Poins and the Prince had found nothing in his pockets but scores owing to the inn, but he includes "three or four bonds of forty pound apiece and a seal ring of my grandfather's". There were no such bonds, of course, and the ring, according to the Prince, was a trifle of copper. How well

Shakespeare knew how to draw a comic which appealed to the English sense of humour and affection.

LONDON. A STREET.

This, the second scene of the first act of the *Second Part*, shows Falstaff taking the air in company with his page bearing his sword and buckler, indicating that the old rogue is going to trade on the good service he had done, or was supposed to have done, in the field of Shrewsbury. We may be sure that the fat knight will not stray very far from THE BOAR'S HEAD. Indeed, he merely wishes to be out of doors in order to send his page with four different letters from which he hopes to gain some personal good. Therefore we may assume that it was a street within view of St. Michael's Church, Cornhill, in the neighbourhood of Eastcheap. In this scene Shakespeare makes Falstaff ridicule one of the scandals of his day. He alludes to Bardolph going to buy him a horse in Smithfield, a notoriously swindling horse fair held on Fridays, and owns that he himself bought Bardolph in Paul's, by which he meant Paul's Walk. This was the name for the middle aisle of St. Paul's Nave, which was the resort of idlers, who came to see the fun of gamesters cheating the unsophisticated and rogues playing confidence tricks against country visitors to London. It was in fact much like the Temple of Jerusalem, from which Christ whipped away the moneychangers because of their cheatings. The pillars were actually used as props on which to hang all manners of advertising matter. Here also people of the town went to gossip loudly, and to gain scandalous tales about the great ones of the City or the Court. Political situations were discussed here. Statesmen were criticized and laughed at. In short the aisle of Paul's was perhaps the noisiest and busiest place of business, roguery and pleasure in the whole of the City of London. Falstaff says he bought Bardolph in Paul's, meaning that the worst servants out of work went there to tout for new positions. If there happened to be no job to be picked up, there were plenty of pockets to be picked.

Poor Falstaff, with only seven groats and twopence in his purse, but with letters in his hand which he ostentatiously holds out for all to see his high connections: letters addressed to the Prince of Wales, to his brother Prince John of Lancaster and to the Earl of Westmoreland. All begging letters, of course, and another one, which no doubt he kept hidden till delivering it to his page, addressed to an old sweetheart, Mistress Ursula, who for the sake of his title seemed to hope for matrimony. Of

course he meets the very man he would avoid, the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, but, nothing taken aback, he unsuccessfully tries to borrow a thousand pounds from him.

LONDON. A STREET, is the opening of the second act, and here once more Falstaff runs foul of the Chief Justice. Here the Hostess, quickly resenting that the Knight had kissed her only to demand thirty shillings, tries to place him under arrest. After her accusation, the Knight turns the tables by explaining that the Hostess is a poor mad soul, who goes up and down the town saying that her eldest son is like the Chief Justice, which embarrasses the high officer, who makes it clear that the knight must pay his debt forthwith to Dame Quickly, which he does by persuading her to pawn her plate in order to furnish him with the pounds. The last line of the scene in the mouth of the Justice is a tribute which all the world pays to Falstaff:

Now the Lord lighten thee! THOU ART A GREAT FOOL.

LONDON. ANOTHER STREET, follows straight on, with the Prince and Poins receiving Falstaff's letter, and plotting to surprise him at supper disguised as drawers in order that he may appear in his true colours. This adventure of the Madcap Prince takes place in A ROOM IN THE BOAR'S HEAD TAVERN IN EASTCHEAP.

There is an interesting allusion in this scene to the forerunner of the popular game in our public houses of today—SHOVE-HALFPENNY. When Doll Tearsheet suggests that Pistol shall be thrust downstairs, Falstaff orders Bardolph to "*quoit him down, like a shove-groat shilling*". The same game played on a smooth slippery board, but with a more exalted coin. The mention of stairs suggests that the best private room reserved for special guests like the Prince of Wales was on the first floor of THE BOAR'S HEAD. Falstaff would naturally annex the best room even in the absence of the Prince. Dame Quickly calls it her Dolphin Chamber. The Dolphin as a heraldic badge was probably represented either in the carving or upon the tapestry which she is so loath to sell for the accommodation of the Knight's purse. Having played their joke upon Falstaff by serving him at supper, the Prince hastens to Westminster, while a dozen captains await Falstaff to make ready for the wars. Both Doll and the Hostess take a sad farewell of their hero, the latter exclaiming that she has known him twenty-nine years as an honest and true-hearted man. But the old rogue, preferring Doll, hurries

downstairs and then sends Bardolph up to fetch her in order that he can take a closer farewell unwatched by the Hostess. What a great rogue! What a great fool!

WESTMINSTER. A ROOM IN THE PALACE, is a short scene of the Court theme sandwiched in between two big Falstaff scenes, in order to give the comedian a breathing space, since the great skit on recruiting is a hard-working one for the Fat Knight. Shakespeare never expected his actors to do the impossible.

This scene in the Palace of Westminster links up with the Farewell in the preceding play between Richard and his Queen, and in the mouth of Bolingbroke, Richard's words of prophecy spoken in Northumberland are repeated. The skilful poet does not repeat word for word what the audience have heard Richard say in the other play, but what Northumberland would have repeated to him. Instead of the *mounting* Bolingbroke ascends my throne, we have here the word *cousin*. The next London scene occurs at the end of Act IV, of which it is the fourth scene.

WESTMINSTER. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Some editors head this scene with the title, THE JERUSALEM CHAMBER. According to Shakespeare's text this is obviously an error, since the dying King's last order is to carry him into the Jerusalem Chamber. This scene would therefore be the King's bedchamber with an ante-room before it. Were the King in the habit of sleeping in the Jerusalem Chamber he would not have been ignorant of its name, but he remembers it only as the lodging or room in which he first did swoon. Shakespeare has in this bedchamber scene vindicated Prince Hal from undue haste to seize the crown for his own vanity. He wished to bring the hero of his next play before an audience who knew him not to be lacking in filial love. By removing the crown from his father's pillow he only thought to remove the symbol of care from his dying eyes.

Since viewing the corpse of Richard II, Henry had vowed to make a journey in pilgrimage to the Holy Land as an act of repentance. He had many years before been told in prophecy that he should not die but in Jerusalem. Like Macbeth, believing in the witches' twisted prophecy that he should never be vanquished till Birnam Forest came to Dunsinane and that no man born of woman could destroy him, so had Henry vainly supposed that the Jerusalem in which he should die would be the Holy Land. Worn out with care and remorse, he shows at the end the

grim humour of a fatalist, and orders the Princes to carry him to the room known as Jerusalem.

> . . . bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie;
> In that Jerusalem shall Harry die.

The chamber in question is attached to the south-west tower of the Abbey, but what existed of the room in his reign is no more, the Abbey buildings having been so extensively repaired and rebuilt. For a long period in history, however, the famous picture of Richard II hung in the Jerusalem Chamber, as though the ghost of the murdered King hovered in his enemy's death-room.

WESTMINSTER. AN APARTMENT IN THE PALACE.

This is the second scene of the last act, and shows us Prince Hal for the first time as King Henry V. Already Consideration has whipp'd the offending Adam out of him, and we find him so full of understanding that he bestows a continuance of office upon his former tormentor the Lord Chief Justice. In shouldering his heavy responsibility as King he has thrown aside the cloak of his wilder days. This is stressed by the dramatist in his next London scene, A STREET, in which we see Falstaff's women, Quickly and Doll, dragged along by the Beadles. They are the first of Hal's mad companions to fall. There follows a sadder fall in the next and final scene.

A PUBLIC PLACE NEAR WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

It is hard for an English audience to see a comical fellow who has made them laugh so much that they can do nothing but love him cast down in the depths of misery. For Henry V, Shakespeare had nothing but admiration, whether as the madcap or the wise and fearless King. Therefore he had obviously no wish to stain the character of his next heroic play, in which he makes Henry all that England is and stands for, with an action that would make his hero something of a cad. How often one hears people criticizing the King harshly for his treatment of poor old Sir John. Falstaff had banked much money in imagination of the day when his mad Prince would wear the crown . He saw himself as Harry's England surrounded by a sea of sack. But when the supreme moment came the sack seemed only sackcloth. He was exiled to repent his ways. Having borrowed a thousand pounds from

his friend Shallow, whom he has carried with him to London for preferment, his hopes are dashed by the changed King's attitude. As the coronation procession approaches, he hears that his Doll Tearsheet is in prison. Still confident of the King's grace, he says largely: "I will deliver her."

As the King passes he cries out familiarly, ignoring the rebuke of his old enemy the Chief Justice, whom no doubt he is surprised to see still in office. He must have thought: "If Hal can pardon him, what will he not do for me?"

Portia's judgement of Shylock seems merciful to Henry's upon Falstaff. The sight of a jolly old rogue turned in a few seconds into a beaten piece of old humanity is more dreadful than to see a cruel Jew thwarted of his cruelty. That is the picture which makes an audience horrified at Henry's behaviour. And yet what more could the King have done than to have promised him a competence for life to keep him out of mischief? Galling to Falstaff that his Hal should put this charge into the hands of the hated Chief Justice. The King passes by under the shadow of the Abbey, and the fat knight is left deflated. In utter depression he turns to Shallow and generously owns that he owes him the thousand pounds. Shallow ungenerously asks that he can have it to carry home to Gloucestershire with him. Knowing that this is impossible, Falstaff blows himself out once more with a great hope, excusing the King by saying that he will be sent for in private, trying to believe that the Henry who rebuked him publicly will yet be the Hal to reward him privately. On the strength of this he invites Shallow, with Pistol and Bardolph, to supper. But in that fleeting effort for grandeur comes the Chief Justice with Officers to carry him and his company to the Fleet. No longer can he excuse his voice made husky with sack by saying that he lost it by the singing of anthems. His voice is now husky with the tears of disappointment in his throat as he utters a plaintive protest of "My lord, my lord." The great Fool is borne off to the Fleet Prison while the audience think the worse of the King, because having seen him with the best sense of humour, they object to him suddenly being pompous. Knowing that most of his audience would feel that way about it, Shakespeare lessens the tragedy of Falstaff in the Fleet Prison, by making Prince John tell the Chief Justice that his royal brother had every intent to see that not only Falstaff but all the other roguish followers shall be "very well provided for". Adding that although he had banished them not to come near his person by ten mile on pain of death, he

had every intention of revoking this when the rascals could show that they had repented of their villainous ways. Perhaps there is another note of sadness at the end of this play which has not been noticed because it only concerns Henry's inner thoughts. In determining to cut away from bad company had he not a little regret that the days of THE BOAR'S HEAD were over? Perhaps he hoped to meet a reformed Falstaff later when over a pot of sack in some private apartment of the Palace they might laugh about old adventures, but, alas, Henry never meets Falstaff again. Despite his good resolutions, had he known this it must have made him sad. Had Falstaff lived to see jollier times after the French Wars, perhaps the King might have yearned once more to bandy words with Fat Jack. Certainly Queen Elizabeth did. She gloried in the rogue so much that she commanded his reappearance in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which was first played by the Choristers of St. George's in the School Hall which is now the Chapter Library. We deal with this performance in the Windsor section of the book, but if Queen Elizabeth loved Falstaff, why, so did Shakespeare's *Henry V*. But Falstaff dies off stage in the next play, but what a vivid death scene in description! A comical description in honour of the great Fool, but as sad too as his last words, "My lord. My lord." The only one of the followers that Henry was to meet again was Pistol, who told him that he was as good a gentleman as the emperor. Not even for the sake of old days did Henry tell him that he was the King, though he might have wished to ask him news of Dame Quickly and the Eastcheap inn. He allowed poor Bardolph, too, to go to execution for the robbing of a church, so that it was obvious he did not regret the passing of these very low companions. But Falstaff was different. He was a clown of education, and many times he had forgiven him his gross liberties, for he even made it up to him when he had cracked the old rogue's head for likening his royal father to a singing-man of Windsor. No, I think that if Falstaff had lived he would eventually have been sent for to the Palace.

The next play, *King Henry V*, which opened The Globe Theatre on Bankside, has for its London settings Westminster and Eastcheap. The first words of the Chorus were prophetic for what was to be in this theatre:

> O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
> The brightest heaven of invention.

A prayer that was answered, for so long as Shakespeare was associated with this playhouse the Muse of fire burnt ever brighter and ascended for all time into the highest poetical realm of invention.

LONDON. AN ANTE-CHAMBER IN THE KING'S PALACE.

This opens Act One, and contains one of those many gems of simile that make Shakespeare's plays so richly beautiful. After the long speeches of Canterbury extolling the reformed Henry, the Bishop of Ely sums up the miracle by likening the Prince first to the strawberry which grows under the nettle, which if wholesome ripens best and thrives by being neighbour to baser fruit, and then to the summer grass which grows fastest by night. This scene is important to the theme of the play, for it shows us the struggle going on between the Church and the Commons, and these two Churchmen anxious as to which side the new King will incline. To everyone's ultimate satisfaction Henry always inclined to the side of England as a whole, and what he thought was good and best for all, that cause he imposed upon all parties.

I can never believe that Shakespeare wrote this play, as some maintain, as a satire against heroics and sweeping dictatorship. I am sure there was no tongue in his cheek as he wrote it. He believed in Henry. He was quite sure that God fought on his side. In fact he looked upon God as an Englishman, and so, being an Englishman, it was only natural that God would want to fight the French. And in whose company could God fight better than in Harry's? Though Shakespeare allowed himself to laugh at many English characteristics, he never laughed at England. He loved and believed in a heroic England and he made Henry his ideal hero. When he allows Henry to make extravagant boasts, it is only because he knows that England has everything to boast about. Henry's conceit is only pride in his country. In himself he is humble, and ever ready to learn from others, as we gather in the second scene of the play which is titled LONDON. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE SAME, meaning the Palace of Westminster. This would be the Great Presence Chamber in which he is to receive the French Ambassadors, and to which the Archbishop and Bishop of Ely repair, and at The Globe Theatre this would be conveyed by the curtains of the Inner Stage being opened revealing the throne. What a grand scene it is, and Shakespeare takes pains at once to stress the wisdom of the young King. Although in his princely days

he had been wild in London, his education had been carefully seen to, for at the age of eleven he was a student in Queen's College, Oxford, and lodged in a small room over the gateway. Here at all events he learnt the discipline of learning, knowing that it is wisdom to know what one does not know and then to find the best expert on that subject to instruct one. This Henry does in this very scene. He seems to know something of the Law Salique but not enough, so bids the Archbishop enlighten him.

In history he had to leave the discipline of learning too early to give his scholarship full scope, for he was put to the discipline of the camp, where although military discipline was taught, moral discipline was lax compared to that at the university. Thus being forced into manhood before he had hardly begun to be a boy, his wildness in the Eastcheap Tavern is the more excusable. It is in this scene that the Archbishop delivers another of Shakespeare's miraculous similes when he likens human government to that of the bees. Henry listens attentively to the Archbishop's discourse, and on the strength of his arguments makes up his mind exactly how to deal with the French Ambassadors. To the Ambassador he is courtesy itself. He realizes that the present of the tennis balls is an insult from the Dauphin, and that the Ambassador is but carrying out an unpleasant task that has nothing to do with him, except to carry it out as politely as possible. Henry is just to a fine point. A chronicler wrote of him that he was a shepherd whom his flock loved, and lovingly obeyed, and that this shepherd was such a justiciary that no offence was unpunished, nor friendship unrewarded, and that under him rebellion was banished and sedition suppressed. This love of fairness may have come from his experiences with King Richard II, with whom he went to the Irish Wars. That he was a favourite with this King whom his father deposed is obvious, since, as Henry of Monmouth, Richard knighted him. For Richard he had a deep sympathy, and, despite filial love, owned his father was at fault in compassing the crown.

It was Henry V who removed Richard's body from Langley, where he had been buried in his Uncle York's ancestral church after having been brought from Windsor to London to be publicly exposed, and with great state placed the royal remains in Westminster Abbey. Taking his father's sin upon himself as part of his inheritance, he owns that he had bestowed more contrite tears upon Richard's body than from it issued forced

drops of blood. He had five hundred poor in yearly pay so that twice a day they could lift up their withered hands to heaven to pardon blood so wrongfully shed, and he built two chantries in which the sad and solemn priests could sing for Richard's soul.

Even the fact of being held as a hostage by Richard during his father's invasion did not deter him from a generous sympathy which he always held towards the unfortunate king. The Dauphin's speech the Ambassador offers either in the couched words of his Prince or sparingly covered with his own tactful veneer. With the Church now at the back of him, Henry owns to being no tyrant but a Christian king, and in answer to the Dauphin's scorn, he boasts back of what the Dauphin may expect, if God so wills, in whose name he intends to strike in this well-hallowed cause. Dismissing the Embassy with courtesy, he then tells the Court that with God on their side he will chide the Dauphin for his merry message and make him blush at it. The religious belief shows through all his doings and speeches, and Shakespeare sends him to France as God's Messenger of wrath.

At one time or another I have had the privilege of playing all the male parts, small and great, in this play, and in the Elizabethan manner, uncut. I have seen many fine actors play in it too. I saved my schoolboy money in order to go time and time again to see the ringing-voiced Lewis Waller as Henry with Mollison as Pistol, with the best support available in London. Those who remember Waller will never forget his heroic battle voice. I first saw him as Brutus. I was unsophisticated. I was not experienced enough to ask myself whether this was the real Brutus. I was quite content that he made of him the hero. Here was no weakness. Here was no vanity. It was sheer heroics, in voice and manner. One felt that Waller had the right to kill a hundred Caesars if he was so disposed. His Henry was in the same vein. So was his Bastard in *King John*. He made Antony the villain. One loved Cassius because Brutus loved him too. Waller was theatrically efficient. A fine actor too, as his Monsieur Beaucaire showed. In Henry his heroics would have delighted Shakespeare, but the best all-round Henry I ever wish to see is Ivor Novello. He brought the heroics when needed, but he brought a great deal more. The scholar, the thinker, the statesman, the philosopher were all given their full measure. The humour too was never lacking. That his production happened at an unfortunate crisis in our

history was a tragedy, for I think with many that never in the glamorous history of Drury Lane has a classical play been so satisfying.

That Shakespeare was influenced by an earlier play entitled *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* has been established. In his pardon of the Chief Justice, the poet ignores history and follows the old play. Actually Sir William Gascoigne of the parish Harewood, near Leeds, and appointed to be Chief Justice in 1400, was superseded at Henry's accession by Sir William Hunkford and buried in Harewood Parish Church. Shakespeare realized, however, that the pardoning of his enemy gained the right sort of sympathy for the stage, and, as I have said before, he was a dramatist before a historian. He knew what was wanted in his own job. And this situation was too good to miss, whether true or no. The second act is introduced with a Chorus that advertises chiefly the second scene at Southampton. What a glorious surprise, therefore, when the audience realized that the opening of the new act was their old friend EASTCHEAP.

This is the street before The Boar's Head Tavern, and old friend Bardolph with Nym opens the Harlequinade, preparatory to the entrance of two other old friends, Pistol and Dame Quickly. To them runs the Boy, one of those true Cockneys that Shakespeare knew so well. He tells them the dreadful news that Falstaff is very ill. As he wrote it Shakespeare for the moment forgets his hero the King, and thinks of his dying great Fool. He makes the Hostess say what is heartrending: "*The king has killed his heart.*"

The Hostess has gone off with the Boy, and the others make friends, but Quickly comes back to hasten them to the death-bed, and the audience realize that Falstaff is near his end. He forgets the King once more in the mouth of Nym: "*The king hath run bad humours on the knight.*" Then, remembering that the King is his hero, makes Nym add: "*The king is a good king.*"

In the next scene we see the King as a good justiciary, but this is Southampton followed by the last London scene in this play.

LONDON. BEFORE A TAVERN IN EASTCHEAP.

THE BOAR'S HEAD, of course, with Pistol married to Dame Quickly and so Mine Host. A very funny scene, but sad too, for Falstaff he is dead. Drawn together by this common grief, Nym forgets the jealousy of Pistol he showed in the first Eastcheap

scene. He had coveted the position of Mine Host himself, we may be sure, more for the access to good drink and food and the lodging of such a comfortable inn than for any love of the old Dame.

The description of Falstaff's death in the mouth of Quickly is the more moving by reason of its being so funny. He passed away as Thames tide turned, as though the river had to pause to pay its last respect to the fat knight who had so often swaggered on its banks. To fumble with the sheets, to play with flowers, and to smile upon fingers' ends, have been from ancient times looked upon as signs of a patient's end. Shakespeare makes the dying Knight do all this as he cries out on God, on sack and women. The oil that was in him which he thought the Devil would avoid in case it set Hell on fire turned cold, and his liquor-fed nose became as sharp as a pen, while he babbled of green fields. So passed away the merriest rogue of the stage, worn out with ill-living and finished by a broken heart. He "*went away an it had been any christom child*". Dame Quickly here means that he had drifted into childishness, which makes the picture the more pathetic. She really means a Chrisom child, for she is the ancestress of Mrs. Malaprop. A *chrisom* was in those days a white cloth which was laid upon an infant's head at baptism, when chrism, the sacramental oil, was used for anointing. In the case of an infant dying within a month of its birth, this chrisom cloth was utilized as a shroud. Children thus dying were commonly called CHRISOMS.

It is laughable to think of this "fat-kidneyed rascal", as the Prince called him, having been a newborn babe, especially when we remember Falstaff's own description of his birth. "*I was born about three of the clock in the afternoon with a white head, and something a round belly.*" Though Dame Quickly ended her own life in hospital with a foul malady, she had always shown a motherly attitude towards Falstaff, and she nursed him to his end just as she would have done for the tiniest chrisom child.

For the next London scene we have to go to the opening of the next play, in which our author pursues England's story, now bound with the envious factions of York and Lancaster. In the last London scene in the preceding play, we have been saddened by a death-scene that happens off-stage. In this our next London scene the death is over and the funeral in progress of Falstaff's companion, Prince Hal, the mighty hero of Agin-

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court, whom his brother Bedford describes as "*too famous to live long*".

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Dead March. Enter the Funeral of King Henry V, attended on by the Dukes of Bedford, Gloster, and Exeter; the Earl of Warwick, the Bishop of Winchester, Herald, etc.

Another form gives the stage direction, *Corpse of King Henry the Fifth discovered lying in state.*

The first direction is the more likely to have been used, since the bearing in of the coffin added to the pageantry of procession which was so popular in the Elizabethan theatre. Similarly, Caesar's body is *produced* into the Market-place, and in *Richard III* the corpse of Henry VI is borne in an open coffin when the procession takes the stage.

Shakespeare uses the first scene of the *First Part* of *King Henry VI* to extol further the hero of his last play. Falstaff is dead. Harry of England is dead. And the audience "*must yearn therefore*". No sooner is Harry dead than the "flower-de-luces", as the Messenger says, are being cropped from the Royal Arms. Through the defeat of Talbot in France, one half of England's coat is cut away, and the ghost of the dead king in the Abbey puts desperate courage into the warriors attending his funeral.

The next London scene is BEFORE THE GATES OF THE TOWER. This would be the gates looking on to the Hill.

Here, with Gloster quarrelling with Winchester for the possession of the City Fortress, start the cankers of sedition that eat into the fair roses of England. Such a situation needed a Henry V to deal with it. But the young King, Henry VI, is in Eltham, and about to be made a pawn for the warlike knights upon the board of government. The next London scene develops the growth of the canker, and is Shakespeare's own creation. The setting is LONDON. THE TEMPLE GARDENS.

Knowing well the confusing task he has before him in making plain to his audiences the intricate history of the Wars of the Roses, he decides to teach them through their eyes as well as their ears. He helps them at the start to realize on which faction his characters are ranged. For this he has resource to "props". The Temple Garden is set with rose-trees, red and white. Richard Plantagenet opens this badging of the parties by plucking a white rose. John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, immediately

plucks a red one, appealing to any that is neither coward nor flatterer to follow his example. The Earl of Warwick follows suit with Plantagenet and plucks the white. The Earl of Suffolk follows Somerset and plucks the red. Vernon takes the white, while Somerset bids him be careful not to prick his finger lest his blood make the rose the right colour. A Lawyer, unnamed, plucks a white rose too. As the Earls quarrel, it is now perfectly clear to the audience which cause they are supporting.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE TOWER, is the next scene, with the dying Mortimer carried in a chair by two Keepers. This scene is put in by Shakespeare in order to make clear to the audience the claims of Plantagenet, who, moved by his uncle's death upon the stage, announces his intention of hastening to Parliament for the stating of claims.

LONDON. THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

Actually this Parliament met at Leicester, so that no useful end is served in wondering whether it sat in Westminster Hall according to Shakespeare. He kept it to London because he saw the value of again using the Mayor as on Tower Hill. But he was historically correct in introducing the hand-to-hand brawling that attended this session. It was known at the time as "The Parliament of Bats". "Bat" is an ancient word for club, and still preserved in our national game of cricket. Clubs are still called bats on the Romney Marsh, by reason of the cudgels carried by the smugglers against the revenue men. A "batsman" was a man told off to knock the excise man on the head. Shakespeare makes the retainers of Gloster and Winchester skirmish in the Hall with bloody pates. An extraordinary scene to take place in Parliament, but we must own that our House of Commons has not always been entirely free from brawling and sometimes blows. The quarrel between the Bishop's men and those of the Lord Protector is patched up by the wishes of the young King, and Plantagenet is created Duke of York. Here again Shakespeare is careful not to muddle the audience with the many titles. By showing the kneeling Richard Plantagenet rise before the King as York, they remember his new title when he next appears. At the end of this scene Exeter is left alone and is used as a Chorus to the audience for the purpose of announcing what is to be the main theme of the three plays, namely that it was prophesied that Henry of Monmouth should win all, but that his son Henry of Windsor should lose all.

London is used twice more in this play, and both for the same purpose.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Scene One and Scene Five. In the first Henry is told to marry Margaret of Anjou. In the last scene, after hearing of Margaret's wonders from Suffolk, the princess daughter of the King of Naples is sent for to be crowned Queen of England. The close of the play leaves Suffolk alone addressing his thoughts to the audience. In love with Margaret, whom he has made Queen, and realizing that her strength of character will rule the weak young King, he determines to rule them both by winning Margaret's heart. With this net of villainy he thinks to enmesh his enemies and become, through Margaret's love, the voice of England.

The *Second Part* of *King Henry VI* opens in London with the return of Suffolk, bringing with him Queen Margaret.

A ROOM OF STATE IN THE PALACE is Westminster, and the Queen is welcomed by the King. It was a dearly bought marriage, since England had to hand over the duchies of Anjou and Maine to Margaret's father, and this strikes Gloster to the heart, who, having prophesied that France will be lost ere long, takes a bitter farewell of his enemy the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester. The next scene is LONDON. A ROOM IN THE DUKE OF GLOSTER'S HOUSE.

All the great lords, and certain bishops too, had their London residencies. Certain names are still preserved in buildings re-erected on the sites of old palaces. Somerset House is an example, the present building taking its title from the palace of the Protector Duke of Somerset, who lived there during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI. Gloucester is a name widely used in London today. There is a Gloucester House, amongst many of the same name, in Old Gloucester Street in the Holborn district. No doubt the London household of the Lord Protector in this play lived in Holborn. When Gloster is summoned to attend the King and goes out with the Messenger, his duchess admits John Hume, a crafty priest, who dabbles in black magic. It is arranged that he shall bring Roger Bolingbroke, the conjurer, and Margery Jourdain, the witch, to raise a Spirit for the Duchess. These characters were all taken from history, and John Hume was the only one to gain a pardon for his crime. The witch was burned at Smithfield, and Bolingbroke was drawn and quartered at Tyburn. The charge was treason, in that their

sorcery upon a wax image of the King had intent to make him waste away and die.

The four scenes in this act are all in London and the third is A HALL IN THE PALACE.

Some editors prefer A ROOM rather than Hall, but the entry of the Petitioners standing close points to the place being of easy access to all classes. It is in this scene that Margaret first shows her headstrong character, and finding that all petitions are addressed to the Lord Protector, she tells Suffolk her opinion of the government in England, and shows him her disappointment in the King, whom she had hoped was such a man as Suffolk himself when he rode a tilt for her love in Tours. She finds him no soldier but a scholar, whose only thoughts are religion. She wishes that he could be made Pope and carried to Rome. She then attacks the Cardinal, Somerest, Buckingham and York and finally the Duchess of Gloster. This hatred of the Queen for Eleanor Cobham, the Duchess, is Shakespeare's invention, for she was disgraced three years before Margaret's arrival in England. Shakespeare's way is better for the plot, which was ever most important to him, and the plan of Suffolk to strike at Gloster through his wife's disgrace is good theatre. After the King's entrance and during the bickering of the lords, Margaret demands why Gloster is still Protector, and he expresses his willingness to resign at the King's wish. Poor Henry. He has to endure quarrels all round him, and hear Suffolk slighting the crown by accusing Gloster of being King. And his wife, in determining to overthrow the Protector, makes up her mind that she will not only rule Henry but the kingdom too. Suffolk is her supporter in this, but thinks that he will be the one to rule the Queen. His scheme for entrapping the Duchess of Gloster occurs in the next scene—LONDON. THE DUKE OF GLOSTER'S GARDEN.

The raising of spirits was a popular form of stage contrivance in Shakespeare's time. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* was a success. King James I possessed the superstition of a Scot, and Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* to please him; when the witches raise his ancestor Banquo who points to the show of Kings, he was alluding to the House of Stuart. It was generally supposed that spirits raised for questioning were in haste to be sent back to where they belonged. The First Apparition raised in *Macbeth* almost immediately asks to be dismissed, and the Spirit in this scene raised by Margery Jourdain says: "*Have done, for more I hardly can endure.*"

THE CHURCH AT BOSWORTH

KING RICHARD'S WELL, BOSWORTH FIELD

A weird scene to happen in a London garden. The Duchess sitting above on a balcony, and the Magic Circle made below till it thunders and lightens terribly, and then the Spirit rising to be questioned. The Duchess hears the fate of her enemy Suffolk, who is to die by water, but Suffolk is too crafty to come himself to arrest the necromancers. He sends York and Buckingham with an armed guard to make the arrests.

LONDON. THE DUKE OF YORK'S GARDEN, is the second scene of the next act, and is used by Shakespeare to straighten out in the minds of the audience the claim which York makes to get the Crown. How far these history lessons of which Shakespeare was so fond impressed the audience we cannot tell. It largely depended upon the actor making his points clear. If he did not, there must have been a good deal of coughing and fidgeting during such a genealogical discussion. The Earl of Salisbury and his son the Earl of Warwick, who became known as the Kingmaker, range themselves upon the side of York.

LONDON. A HALL OF JUSTICE.

This would have been one of the halls in the Palace of Westminster, perhaps Westminster Hall itself, where many trials were held. Henry opens the scene by pronouncing judgement against the Duchess of Gloster and her confederates. We think of Henry as a gentle young man, but his words are brutal enough for the worst tyrant in this speech.

> The witch in Smithfield shall be burn'd to ashes,
> And you three shall be strangled on the gallows.

The Duchess, for all her noble birth, was ordered to do three days' open penance, and then to go into banishment at Peel Castle in the Isle of Man. Gloster, who does not attempt to argue against the law on behalf of his wife, begs the King to let him withdraw, saying that his wife's disgrace has finished him, and the King seizes the opportunity to demand the Staff of Office saying that he will be his own Protector. He sends his uncle away, however, with a loving farewell, which infuriates Margaret, who demands the staff sharply, and then in triumph announces that Henry is now King and Margaret Queen.

Shakespeare then introduces an amazing incident which in history took place in Smithfield. This is the trial by battle between the Armourer and his Apprentice. It was not until

1819 that the law abolished this unfair way of settling a dispute. In the Middle Ages it was firmly believed that God always allowed the innocent party to win. In the archives of the Exchequer there is a list of expenses for barriers to be set up in Smithfield for this occasion, and brought from Westminster. Also sand, gravel and rushes for the place of battle. Then there is entered fees for the hangman. Although the Apprentice killed his master in fight, the traitor's body was put through all the ceremony of execution, a barbarous thing to do to a corpse.

Not being permitted to carry noble weapons of steel, the two combatants were armed with a sandbag fastened to a staff. Although the Apprentice is afraid to fight and makes a sorry figure on entering the Hall, his opponent has been made drunk by his supporters, so that even his knowledge of fence does not save him, and he is knocked down and killed. Though York bids the victor thank God and the good wine that hindered the Armourer, King Henry is certain that God in justice has proved the innocence of the Apprentice, whom he summons to receive a reward for having killed a traitor. A queer cruel custom, like the one that follows in LONDON. A STREET, which is the next scene, and shows Gloster and his servants in mourning cloaks waiting the coming of the Duchess for her penance. She appears in a white sheet with papers pinned upon her back, her feet bare, and a taper burning in her hand. At the sight of their mistress walking the cobbles in bare feet, the servants propose to rescue her, but this Gloster will not allow. He had always upheld the full rigour of the law. He knows his wife has sinned and tells her that this penance will wipe away her scandal. The Duchess warns her husband against his enemies, and they part, he to Bury to attend the parliament held there, and she to banishment.

LONDON. CARDINAL BEAUFORT'S BEDCHAMBER.

This, the third scene of the third act, is the deathbed of Winchester, and it would be in his Palace on Bankside. It is a short terrible scene. Warwick, looking down on the dying Cardinal, saying: "*See, how the pangs of death do make him grin*" and "*so bad a death argues a monstrous life.*"

BLACKHEATH.

Five miles from London this common of two hundred and seventy acres may be included in Shakespeare's London scenes. His own monarch, James I, first introduced the game of golf

to England by playing here. On the road from the Kent coast to London, it made a convenient camping ground for insurgents like the followers of Jack Cade, whom we meet in this second scene of the fourth act. Shakespeare has drawn Cade as a strong bully with a quick wit and a grim humour. When his friend Michael rushes in to say that the King's Forces are come against them under Sir Humphrey Stafford, who is a knight, Cade promptly makes himself a knight, by kneeling down and telling himself to stand up as Sir John Mortimer. He then feels equal to cope with any other knight. Cade was set on to his rebellion by York. He had seen Cade fight in Ireland and knew him a bold adventurer who might succeed. If he had succeeded York would have reaped the benefit. If he failed he knew that even the rack would not get a word out of such an obstinate fellow. York used Cade in order to see how far the temper of the people was in favour of the House of York.

ANOTHER PART OF BLACKHEATH is the next scene, and we see Cade bestowing a peculiar promise of favour upon his fellow townsman, Dick, the butcher of Ashford, as a reward for his felling the King's Forces like sheep and oxen in his slaughter-house. He says that when he is Protector he will make Lent twice as long, and Dick shall have a licence to kill "*for a hundred lacking one!*" This meant for a week, which licence was given in Lent as a great mark of favouritism. In the fight at the beginning of this scene, Cade's men are successful, and both Sir Humphrey and his brother William are killed.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Here we see the King and Queen talking with Lord Say and Buckingham about the rebels. In this scene Henry shows a touch of jealousy over the dead Suffolk, and tells the Queen, who is mourning for her favourite, that if he had died instead of Suffolk he did not think she would mourn so bitterly for him. The Queen, knowing that in the weak King lay her strength, says she would not mourn but die for him. A messenger comes in to say that the rebels are already in Southwark, where Cade has proclaimed himself Lord Mortimer and rightful heir. On Blackheath he had but boasted that he would be Protector and let the King keep his crown because of his father Harry the Fifth. Now he vows to crown himself in Westminster and calls the King usurper. Queen Margaret deplores Suffolk's death and says that were he alive the Kentish rebels would be soon appeased. Buckingham suggests retiring to Killingworth,

until there is time to raise a power. This is not the Killingworth in Northumberland, but Kenilworth in Warwickshire, a castle which had been added to and improved greatly by John o' Gaunt. It was one of the largest and most important castles in England, attaining perhaps its greatest fame under Elizabeth's Leicester, and finally destroyed by the Commonwealth. To this place of safety the King agrees to go and wishes Lord Say to accompany the royal party, since he knows Cade has sworn to have Say's head. But Say thinks his own unpopularity might further jeopardize the King's safety, so decides to stay in his City house. Another messenger enters to say that Cade has taken London Bridge, and that the rascal people have joined the rebels and are about to spoil the City and Court.

Henry tells Margaret that "God our hope, will succour us." To which Margaret replies that her hope is gone now Suffolk is deceased. They hurry off to take horse for Kenilworth.

LONDON. THE TOWER.

This is one of the shortest scenes in Shakespeare. The Lord Mayor has sent to the Tower for help, and Lord Scales from the Tower wall tells the loyal citizens to meet in Smithfield, and gather head against the rebels while he will try to hold the Tower which Cade has sworn to take.

LONDON. CANNON STREET.

Cade enters and theatrically strikes his staff upon London Stone, and then sitting upon it declares that he is lord of the City and commands that the gutters shall run nothing but claret at the City's cost for the first year of his reign. London Stone, a fragment of which was built into the wall of St. Swithin's Church opposite Cannon Street Station, was supposed to be originally a Roman milliarium, or the centre from which all the Roman roads radiated over England, like the Golden Milestone in the Forum at Rome. Cade therefore regards it as the centre of his captured City. As he gives out that it is treason for any to call him other than Lord Mortimer, a soldier dashes along calling him, "Jack Cade". "Knock him down!" roars Cade, and they promptly kill him. News is brought that the citizens are collected against him in Smithfield, and Cade orders his followers to come and fight with them. "But first," he orders largely, "go and set London Bridge on fire, and if you can, burn down the Tower too."

LONDON. SMITHFIELD.

Here Cade sets upon the King's forces and kills the leader, Matthew Gough. His next orders are to pull down the Savoy, which we have mentioned before as being the London Palace of Lancaster. In the reign of Richard II it had been destroyed by Wat Tyler. No doubt it was renovated to make it habitable, but it was not entirely restored till the reign of Henry VII, who endowed it as a hospital. With a burning hatred against all lawyers, whom he condemns to be killed in mass, he orders that the inns of court shall be pulled down too. Lord Say is captured and beheaded with his son-in-law and their heads on poles carried as Cade's banners. His grim humour is revolting. He makes the dead heads kiss at every corner, but in the next scene Buckingham and Old Clifford are too clever for him.

SOUTHWARK.

It has been pointed out that Shakespeare has made a mistake in ordering his rabble "*Up Fish Street and Down St. Magnus' Corner*", since both these places were on the City side of the river and not in Southwark. But Cade could have looked across the water and made another expedition across London Bridge, giving directions beforehand. Old Lord de Clifford was a firm Lancastrian, and a direct descendant through his maternal grandmother from Edward III. He cleverly gains favour for his King with Cade's mob by playing on their love for the late King. He predicts a quick French invasion if Englishmen continue to war amongst themselves. Cade, realizing that the tables are turned against him, fights his way through the mob and escapes, when Buckingham offers a thousand crowns for his head and a free pardon for all from the King if arms are laid aside. This Southwark scene is the last we see of London in this play, for the King's Camp in the next act was pitched in Kent proper, not on Blackheath, but between it and Dartford. Cade's desertion by the mob was as much his own fault as it was quick action of Clifford and Buckingham. His own brutality had sickened them. They had witnessed the terrible fight on London Bridge, when from burning houses women and children had sought escape on the pikes of the rebels, or by leaping into the river and being drowned. They had seen the rebels fighting under the bawling Cade upon the steps of St. Magnus' Corner. This fighting ground would be in Lower Thames Street, where the church of St. Magnus stands. Incidentally the Fish Street mentioned is Fish Street Hill, where

the Monument now stands. Had Cade been a moral man burning with zeal to right the oppressed, he might have been another Oliver Cromwell, but his most depraved followers realized that life under his rule would be worse tyranny than serving under the King and his Lords. It was a marvel that Cade accomplished as much mischief as he did, and that his fellow rebels did not turn from him sooner. The best that can be said of him is that he had a desperate bravery, and with trained men under him might have become a distinguished captain.

In 1595 there was published a play titled *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke, and the Death of good King Henry the Sixt, with the whole Contention between the two Houses Lancaster and Yorke, as it was sundrie times acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Pembroke his Servants.* Thomas Millington was the publisher, who reprinted it in 1600. From this work Shakespeare wrote his own version as we have it today, titled *The Third Part of Henry the Sixth.* The first scene is LONDON. THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

The stage direction marks that the Yorkist Party Leaders wear white roses in their hats. The occasion was the victorious return of this party from the battle of St. Albans. The Queen has called a Parliament to meet and the Yorkists have broken in by force, arriving before Margaret. Just before the arrival of King Henry, accompanied by the young Clifford, Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Exeter, wearing red roses in their hats, Warwick has led Richard of York to the throne, where Henry finds him seated. Had not Henry been against making "*a shambles of the parliament-house*", both parties were eager to fight it out there and then. It was his weakness on this occasion that lost him his power. Although he could whip up sufficient courage to ask whether he had to stand while York sat upon his throne, and being told this was so, attacked York's claim with spirit, Warwick's soldiers suddenly appearing makes him lose this courage, and he pleads feebly that he may at least be permitted to reign while he lived. York seizes on this way out by demanding the crown for himself and heirs on Henry's death and being Protector of England. Henry's followers upbraid him for thus wronging the Prince of Wales, and England. Exeter alone supports the King in thus ending the civil war and reconciling York and Lancaster, but they have reckoned without Margaret and the Prince. Henry undergoes their bitter scorn, and they both leave him to his feeble misery. Whether Henry was thinking of England or of himself, we cannot tell, but Margaret had

justification in telling the King that he preferred his life to his honour, and knowing her spirit, we can well believe her when she boasts that rather than agree to such a monstrous demand Warwick's soldiers could have tossed her on their pikes. Henry might weep on account of his son being disinherited, but he had no spirit to resist it, and Margaret proved herself the better parent. Poor Henry had no doubt experienced a good deal of her taunts, but his simple conceit when left alone with Exeter after the Queen has told him in presence of their son that she divorces herself from him is tragically comical. He turns and tells Exeter that the poor Queen's love to himself and son had made her angry. Perhaps he saw how futile such a sentiment must seem to Exeter, so he changes his tone and hopes that the Queen will be avenged on the hateful York, and expresses regrets that he has lost the support of Clifford, Northumberland, and Westmoreland, but says that he will write to them entreating them fair and that Exeter shall be the messenger. We must now skip many scenes before our next view of London.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE, is the second scene in the third act. Here we see King Edward IV with his brothers George, now Duke of Clarence, and Richard, now Duke of Gloster, interviewing Lady Grey, whose husband, Sir John, had been killed at St. Albans, thereby forfeiting his lands to the conqueror. The lady has come to beg for her lands to be restored to her children, and since her husband died in the Yorkist cause, Gloster promptly advises his brother to grant her suit. Edward has, however, become suddenly enamoured of the lady and determines to bargain with her for her love. It is in this passage that we see, by his aside remarks to Clarence, that have made this character so popular upon the stage, the real Richard of Gloster. His dry, biting, grim humour is so amusing that despite his villainy, one can't help liking him. By his asides the audience see how he despises Edward, who unsuccessfully tries to win the widow's love dishonourably. Being thwarted in this by the virtuous and quick-witted dame, he desires her so greatly that he takes the honourable way and offers to make her his Queen, and he tells his brothers his mind for her, and that her suit is granted. It is then that a nobleman enters and tells Edward that his enemy Henry is taken and brought a prisoner to the Palace gates. Edward orders him to be conveyed to the Tower, and his brothers to accompany him to hear the news. But when he bids them use the widow honourably, and takes her along with him, Gloster manages to wait behind.

Whenever Shakespeare leaves this Richard alone upon the stage the audience can congratulate themselves that they are in for a good thing in the way he takes them into his confidence. That he has made up his mind to win the crown he tells us, and then enumerates the many barriers in his way. There is Edward, now bent on marrying Lady Grey and the possibility of children. There is brother Clarence, and above all Henry, now in the Tower. Then there is the rightful Prince of Wales. To comfort himself to the task, he remembers that he is a good actor. He tells himself that he can smile, and murder as he smiles, that he can cry Content to that which grieves his heart. That he can make his cheeks wet with artificial tears, and frame the right face for all occasions.

> Can I do this, and cannot get a crown?
> Tut, were it further off, I'll pluck it down.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This is the opening of Act Four. This scene in Westminster shows us Elizabeth Woodville, widow of Sir John Grey, now married to Edward and Queen, which marriage brings a host of troubles upon Edward's head, since he has sent Warwick to arrange a marriage for Edward with the French Queen's sister, Bona. Raising a commoner to the rank of Queen behind his ambassador's back was an insult to Warwick and the French Court with which he was treating, and the King hears that Warwick has in rage made terms with Queen Margaret, and marries his daughter Anne to the Prince of Wales. Clarence determines to marry the other daughter, and goes to join Warwick, but Gloster stays, not for any loyalty for his brother Edward, but to be in London till the forces of Edward leave to fight, in order to scheme for getting the crown himself. Outwardly he remains loyal to his brother.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE TOWER.

This is the fourth scene of the act, and we see Queen Elizabeth with her brother, who has been created Lord Rivers. She tells him that her husband has been taken prisoner by Warwick. Henry is still in the Tower, but Warwick is victoriously on his way to free him, and reinstate him King. Poor Elizabeth had been placed by her husband in the Tower for her own safety while he was at the wars. Thinking wisely that her life would be in danger when Warwick reaches the Tower, since she was expecting to bear Edward a child, she takes Sanctuary.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE TOWER.

This is the sixth scene, and Warwick has freed Henry, who is willing to wear the crown, but resigns the government to Warwick, who prefers to make his son-in-law Clarence Protector, though he is persuaded to rule with him. When all seems satisfactory, and at the King's request Margaret and Prince Edward are to be recalled, news comes that the prisoner Edward IV, now styled Duke of York, has escaped the guards of Warwick's brother, the Archbishop of York, and has fled to Burgundy to seek help. It is in this scene that we see young Richmond, though he does not speak. He was the hope of Somerset and Oxford, who, fearful of his being taken by Edward IV and killed, send him to safety in Brittany.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE BISHOP'S PALACE.

Though many editors omit the word BISHOP'S, it seems pretty certain from the commentaries of the time that when Henry was liberated from the Tower he went to live in the Bishop's Palace of London, which was adjoining St. Paul's Cathedral. Being more priestly minded than kingly, and being for the time alone, he no doubt preferred to be the guest of the Bishop. To the Palace came Warwick and Clarence attended by Montague, Exeter, and Oxford, with the disquieting news that Edward has landed with an army of Germans and Hollanders, and is marching on London, collecting many to his banner. Exeter remains with the King, while the others go to raise an army, with a view of assembling in full force at Coventry. Hardly have they gone, however, before Edward and Gloster sweep into the Palace with soldiers and capture the unlucky Henry, whom they send once more to the Tower, while Edward is once more proclaimed King. Edward and Gloster then march from London to meet the enemy at Coventry.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE TOWER.

This, the sixth scene in the last act, was very often tacked on to the beginning of the play *Richard III*, which follows in sequence. It thus gave the actor a bloody murder in the first scene, and served as a good prologue. But lovers of Shakespeare welcomed the production at The Lyceum in 1877, when Henry Irving discarded Cibber's popular version and gave the play, "arranged for the Stage exclusively from the author's text". Irving was right. This scene belongs to this play and the brilliant

opening of the next play should not be tampered with. The character of Richard is painted by Shakespeare at its worst. He would naturally have been made out everything bad during the Tudor rule. I think, however, it was the advantage to his drama by making him such an arch-devil that influenced the dramatist more. And so long as a villain is given enough grim humour he is always popular with the audience, even though they are shocked at his deeds. The devilish Richard of Shakespeare is the heaven-sent part for the actor. So too is that of his contemporary Louis XI, though Shakespeare only gives a short sketch of this King. Whether Richard perpetrated all the murders Shakespeare gives him credit for is doubtful, but it is quite certain that had he been presented in a more worthy fashion we should have lost one of the greatest stage figures. Born with deformed legs first, and with teeth in his little jaws, a humped back and a shrunken arm, is a good prologue for a villain, and Shakespeare plays on these deformities, giving his character good reason for his bitterness and grim spite. Having murdered Henry, whom he finds reading so hard in the Tower, Richard tells the audience that his next victim will be his brother Clarence. This he intends to do by spreading false prophecies which will make Edward afraid of his brother Clarence. The prophecy must have appealed to Richard's distorted sense of humour, for it said that "by G. his [Edward's] issue disinherited should be". Richard knew that he could make Edward believe that the "G" referred to George of Clarence, though he chuckled to himself, knowing that the "G" who would accomplish this would be himself as "G." for Gloster. This would never enter the head of Edward, since Gloster had stood by him when Clarence had played him false before. Richard had taken part in the murder of Edward Prince of Wales in the tent at Tewkesbury, and now he has alone sent Henry to his account, and thrown his body into another room. He then sets out to visit his next victims in the next scene—LONDON.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Here in this closing scene of this play we see King Edward once more seated upon the throne. With him is Queen Elizabeth and a nurse holding the infant Prince, also Clarence and Gloster. When the King bids his brothers kiss their royal nephew, Gloster jokingly tells the audience that his kiss is the kiss of Judas, crying "All Hail" when he meant "All harm".

The jubilant Edward, secure now, as he thinks, for his

succession, proposes that the Court shall be merry with stately triumphs and mirthful comic shows. This spirit of jubilation is referred to in the opening speech of Gloster in the next play when he speaks of the glorious summer made by the sun of York. A magnificent actor himself in real life, Richard had no use for the comic shows to beguile the weak piping times of peace. He liked to act himself in his own drama. He has told the audience that he can frame his face to all occasions, and weep at will, also Henry just before his murder calls him Roscius. But the time for his best acting is at hand in the next play, *King Richard III.* This play has more London scenes than any.

LONDON. A STREET.

This is the opening of the first act. Shakespeare, with his usual genius for stagecraft, brings his chief character on to serve for his own Chorus. It also gives Richard that lonely path which he is to tread. He had said before, "I am myself alone", and now, lonely, he appears to tell the audience what he intends to do. Although he has planned the arrest of Clarence carefully, this brilliant actor can frame his face to the necessary surprise when in the street he sees Clarence under guard, and on inquiring the reason is told that the King has had him sent to the Tower because his name is George and begins with G. When Richard says that perhaps his royal brother wished Clarence to be re-christened in the Tower, he is no doubt thinking of the christening which he has planned for Clarence in being drowned in a butt of malmsey. This malmsey was a strong sweet wine of which Clarence was very fond. The glorious hypocrisy with which Gloster tries to comfort his brother is shown directly Clarence leaves for the Tower, when his brother looks after him and mutters that he loves him so, that he will shortly send his soul to heaven, and then adds: "If Heaven will take the present at our hands."

With Hastings, newly delivered from the Tower, he is no less hypocritical when he openly affirms that the news of the King's illness is bad indeed, for the moment Hastings has gone Richard again takes the audience into his confidence, saying that he hopes Edward will not live, but then adds quickly that he must not die till his brother George be packed with post-horse up to heaven. He plans to have Clarence murdered at once, and then when Edward is dead of his bad living he will be able to carry out his plan of marrying Warwick's daughter Anne, and this remarkable wooing is described in the scene following—LONDON. ANOTHER STREET.

If this scene were to be brought up to date and presented as a Grand Guignol act, it would probably be banned, on the grounds that the idea would be too offensive. The daring effrontery of Gloster stopping the funeral procession of the King he had murdered and then wooing the daughter-in-law of his victim, whom he had also helped to make a widow, is carrying a situation to the depths of villainy. It is Shakespeare's most masterly wooing. The Balcony Scene in *Romeo and Juliet* is youthful, passionate and beautiful: the wooing of Katharine by Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* is gloriously boisterous: but this wooing of Richard's is mesmeric. Knowing his own power of fascination, he even dares to give her his sword, while confessing that he murdered in order to win her love, and immediately she changes the sword for his ring. She has hardly recovered breath from heaping the foullest insults upon him, when she says, "I would I knew thy heart."

As every Shakesperian actor knows, this scene contains a fearful moment of nervousness for a small-part actor, which has become a well-worn joke. When Gloster threatens the first gentleman halberdier with his sword unless he has the coffin set down, the one-line actor has to avoid a traditional spoonerism.

"My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass," has been uttered by the stage beginner as "and let the parson cough". No doubt, confronting the leading actor adds to his nervousness. Every young actor is warned about the line, which makes him more nervous still. I remember an occasion when a youth determined to avoid the mistake, created a new one, by saying: "My lord, stand back, and let the *carson poff*."

Another famous trap for the young actor occurs right at the end of *As You Like It*, when Jaques de Boys makes a first appearance by dashing in and crying: "Let me have audience for a word or two." This is followed by a complicated speech, known as the Shilling Speech. If the actor is word perfect he wins a shilling from the management. The nervous energy of dashing on and taking the centre of the stage has very often proved the undoing of the beginner, who is apt to dry up after the first line. When Ben Greet, playing either Jaques or Touchstone, cast a new actor for this part, he used to hold up a shilling in front of the wretched young man, and it was not often that he was out of pocket.

But to return to Gloster. By a stroke of genius, he dismisses Anne with a great show of penitence, urging that he has more cause than she to be the mourner. The route of procession was

from St. Paul's towards Chertsey, for the body had been taken from the Tower to the Cathedral, and thence to rest one day at Blackfriars, before the final journey to Chertsey Monastery on Thames' side in Surrey, some fifteen miles distant. It is said that the corpse bled both at St. Paul's and Blackfriars, giving rise to an old superstition that a murdered man bled in the presence of his murderer. A suspected man was ordered to touch the corpse and if it bled his guilt was established. James I treated this matter as an established truth in his Demonologie. Sir Walter Scott uses this trial by touch with dramatic effect in his novel *The Fair Maid of Perth.*

Gloster urges Anne to wait for him at Crosby Place. This was in Bishopsgate, and named after its builder, Sir John Crosby. It now stands in Chelsea, on the Embankment, by Cheyne Walk, where it was re-erected as a residentiary hall for women students in 1910. It is a fine example of domestic architecture in Tudor style. It is generally accepted that Shakespeare made an accidental error in making Gloster give orders that the body should be conveyed to Whitefriars instead of Blackfriars, whither it was undoubtedly taken.

WHITEFRIARS was situated between Salisbury Court and the Temple, and was the Monastery of the Carmelites or White Friars, so called from the white scapula and cloak worn over their brown habits. In those days it possessed the finest library in London. When left alone, Gloster indulges in one of his grimly jocular soliloquies. The amazing change of front shown by Anne fills him with amazement, and then amusement, and in direct antithesis to his first speech in the play when he deplores the fact that his body wanted love's majesty to court an amorous looking-glass, he now tries to persuade himself that he must be a marvellous proper man, and the same man who had had no delight in spying his shadow in the sun now commands the sun to shine in order that he can see it.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE, follows this amazing street scene, and here we see Gloster upbraided by Elizabeth and cursed by Margaret, thoroughly enjoying himself in the role of a virtuous Christian forgiving all those who sought to harm him and his brother Clarence. King Edward having summoned the Queen's party with Gloster to his bedside in order to reconcile them, Gloster fears that the reconcilement may include Clarence, and so despatches two murderers to the Tower to kill him.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE TOWER, follows. After the

magnificent description of his dream, the ghastly murder of Clarence takes place, which finishes the first act.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE, opening Act Two, shows us Edward enfeebled by sickness, and thoroughly repentant in consequence, wishing to be at peace with all men. Gloster enters to praise such blessed labour and a hope that he too may be reconciled with all, saying that enmity is death to him. He entreats pardon for any wrongs he is accused of, and makes friends with the Queen's party. It is then that Elizabeth, moved at his generosity, pleads with her husband for Clarence's freedom. Gloster seizes upon this moment to spring his dramatic surprise, demanding her reason for thus flouting his proffered love, when the news has come of his dear brother's death. The terrified Edward says that he has reversed the order of death, when Gloster answers sadly that the order came too late and that his brother is dead. It is Edward's own deathblow too, for he is helped to his bed, leaving Gloster with Buckingham, to whom he accuses the Queen's kindred of the bloody deed. Chuckling at heart that another bar to his crown has been removed and another about to be so through sickness, he follows with a sad face to see Edward breathe his last.

LONDON. ANOTHER ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This is a scene of double lamentation. First the Duchess of York is mourning for her son Clarence, whose son and daughter are questioning her about their father. The son, Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, tells his grandmother how kind and sorrowful his Uncle Richard has been to him when speaking of his father, and how he wept and kissed him. This shows how very thoroughly Gloster maintained his hypocrisy, in not forgetting even to dissemble in front of this child. Gloster's fascination held such sway over the boy that he tells his grandmother that she is wrong in thinking that his uncle was deceiving him.

Then Elizabeth enters with news of King Edward's death, and while they are all weeping for this double bereavement Gloster enters with his face framed for the occasion to weep with them. The Duchess, in answer to her son Richard's plea for her blessing, prays God to put meekness, love, charity, obedience, and true duty into his breast, to which Richard echoes a fervent Amen, adding aside with his usual roguery, "And make me die a good old man," saying that such is the usual butt-end of a mother's blessing, and marvelling that she left it

out. It is then arranged that Gloster and Buckingham shall fetch Edward's heir from Ludlow Castle, and bring him safely to London to be crowned.

LONDON. A STREET.

This following scene shows in the mouth of three citizens that public opinion was fearful at the thought of another young king who would be put under a Protector. A repetition of civil war that attended the young Henry's coronation is prophesied. The next scene shows the same fear to exist in the Palace.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Here the Archbishop of York is telling the Queen the news of her son's progress towards London, and it is thought safest for the Queen to take the Duke of York, her treasure and goods into Sanctuary.

LONDON. A STREET.

This shows the arrival of the Prince of Wales into London. Besides his escort of Gloster and Buckingham he is welcomed by Cardinal Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, and by the Lord Mayor of London. The Prince is disappointed that his mother and brother have not come to meet him, and Hastings explains that for some reason his royal mother has taken Sanctuary. Buckingham asks the Cardinal to persuade the Queen to send the Duke of York to his brother, and Hastings he instructs to bring him if necessary by force. On the arrival of the young York, Gloster asks the Prince to go along to the Tower, while he goes to fetch the Queen to visit him York asks his brother, why they are to go to the Tower, saying that he will not be able to sleep there for fear of his Uncle Clarence's ghost, but the Prince says that he fears no uncles dead. Buckingham, Gloster, and Catesby are left to plot the seizing of the crown by Richard, in which conspiracy Hastings is to be sounded. When asked by Buckingham what he will do if Hastings refuses, Richard replies sharply, "Chop off his head, man!" and then promises Buckingham the earldom of Hereford for his help.

BEFORE LORD HASTINGS' HOUSE.

This scene shows Hastings drawing nearer to the net. Catesby sounds him in the business which Gloster is set on, and is told that he would rather lose his head than see Edward's son lose the

crown. Hastings feels secure though in the friendships of Richard and Buckingham, and Catesby assures him that both these princes make high account of him, adding to himself with the grim humour he has learned from his master Gloster, "for they account his head upon the bridge", for on London Bridge the heads of traitors were stuck up on poles. Hastings tells Buckingham that he is dining at the Tower and will see him there, and Buckingham, like Catesby, indulges in the grim aside: "And supper too, although thou know'st it not."

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE TOWER.

The Council is met here to fix the date for the coronation. In the absence of Gloster, Hastings is about to answer for him, when the Duke arrives with apologies for having overslept. He then takes Buckingham aside and tells him that Catesby has sounded Hastings to no avail, and they withdraw from the Council, Hastings remarking that Gloster, who can never hide either hate or love, is obviously at peace with all of them. He soon finds how wrong he is in his judgement, when Gloster returns in a rage demanding what should be done to those who are conspiring his death with witchcraft, and have put evil charms upon his body. Hastings, little knowing what is coming, says that his love for Gloster makes him answer that such offenders deserve death. Gloster pointing to his withered arm unfairly accuses the Queen of having consorted with the harlot Mistress Shore in making his deformity. This Mistress Shore had admitted both Edward and Hastings as her lovers, and so the wretched Hastings in the hope of saving her, prevaricates with, "If they have done this thing, my gracious lord——" which Gloster interrupts with "*If!* Thou protector of this damned strumpet, talk'st thou to me of *ifs*?" and immediately calling Hastings a traitor, orders his head to be chopped off, swearing by St. Paul that he would not dine till he had seen it done. Leaving Lovel and Ratcliffe to carry out the execution, he orders the rest who love him to follow him. These two men with Catesby were Gloster's close ministers for evil and inspired the famous lampoon of William Collingbourne in Wiltshire who affixed the lines to the door of the church and was executed for it.

The Cat, the Rat, and Lovel our Dog,
Do rule all England under the Hog.

The HOG was, of course, Richard, whose crest was a Boar's

Head. Hastings blaming himself for being so stupid as not to have taken warnings, such as his horse stumbling three times when looking at the Tower as though the animal were loth to bear his master to the slaughterhouse, laments for England and curses Richard as he is led to the block.

LONDON. THE TOWER WALLS.

Here we see Richard thoroughly enjoying himself, and with Buckingham's assistance, at his favourite trick of play-acting. His whole object in appearing in rusty armour is to prove to the Lord Mayor, whom he has sent Catesby to fetch, as though taken by surprise and treachery, he and Buckingham had to grab any old armour they could find with which to defend themselves. To Gloster this is all a grand joke in the grim comedy he has set himself to play. His general panic prepares the Lord Mayor on his arrival for the worst, and when the head of Hastings is brought in to the battlements and Gloster tells the Mayor how the traitor whom he had loved so that he could weep had very nearly murdered him and Buckingham in the Council Chamber, the Mayor is fully agreed that he deserved his death, and agrees to explain the state of affairs to the citizens.

Gloster was never the man to leave things to chance. For the moment the Lord Mayor is his, but Gloster realizes that on the way to the Guildhall he may think differently. So Buckingham, with his plausible tongue, is sent after him to insinuate the bastardy of his brother Edward's children. That the late King was profligate all England knew. He had been renowned for his beauty and strength but had wasted both in bad living. The Lord Mayor would know this, and perhaps credit the slander against Edward's children. However, Gloster thought it well to go even further. He tells Buckingham to hint that Edward himself was a bastard, and could not have been the son of his father York who was in France at the time. This was pure invention upon Gloster's part, for William of Winchester wrote that York when Regent of France came over to England on purpose to visit his wife. To gain his ends, Gloster had no mercy on anyone's good name, although in this case he advised Buckingham to touch on this point sparingly, because his mother was alive. He then plans another piece of play-acting with which to impress the Lord Mayor in his own favour. He tells his mouthpiece to bring the Lord Mayor to him at Baynard's Castle where he would be found conversing with priests and bishops. For this purpose he sends Lovel to a certain Doctor Shaw, who was brother to the Lord Mayor, and also

Catesby to an Augustine friar, named Penker, both of whom were doctors of divinity and unscrupulous. It has been written of them that they were great preachers, of more learning than virtue, and of more fame than learning. These two rascals were the very men to provide Gloster with two bishops framed to support him in his proposed play-acting. Thorough in his schemes, he closes the scene by planning orders to draw "*the brats of Clarence*", as he calls them, out of sight, and to see that no one should visit the unfortunate princes in the Tower.

LONDON. A STREET.

A SCRIVENER enters bearing the indictment of Hastings, and this character shows that to any thinking man the villainy of Gloster is apparent. He states that the document has taken him eleven hours to make the fair copy from the original document which had taken Catesby as long to frame, and yet within five hours from him now taking it to be read over in St. Paul's, Hastings was not only alive but untainted, free, and without examination. So that he knows Hastings has been executed before being accused. To his legal mind the state of things is bad when such ill-dealing can be plainly seen and no notice allowed to be taken.

LONDON. BAYNARD'S CASTLE.

This was a considerable building in the time of Henry VI's Accession, but was entirely destroyed by fire six years later. It was rebuilt by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester: came into the possession of Henry VI on the Duke's death, but was given later to Richard, Duke of York, the father of Gloster. It derived its name from one of the Conqueror's Norman Barons who built it originally. It is known that Richard of York lived there when he forced Henry VI to make him his heir and dispossess the Prince of Wales, and Edward set out from here when he went to be crowned at Westminster. It was Gloster's chief residence in London. Henry VII restored it and lived there for some time, and Mary was residing there after the tragedy of Lady Jane Grey, and was from there declared Queen. It was in Blackfriars, upon the river bank in Thames Street. Shakepeare would have known it well, as the house he purchased in Blackfriars lay between it and the Blackfriars Theatre. On the river front were five four-storied wings with gabled roofs, protected by hexagonal towers at each corner, and built in a straight line with the west end of St. Paul's. On one side of it was Paul's wharf. This grand building was one of the many totally destroyed in the Great Fire.

This wonderful setting for Gloster's greatest piece of play-acting is described as ACT III. SCENE 7. THE COURT OF BAYNARD'S CASTLE.

Gloster enters from the castle to meet Buckingham, and we can imagine how anxiously he has been looking for his arrival from a casement overlooking the yard. His impatience is accentuated by Shakespeare in his reiterated *How nows*? But Buckingham has to dash his hopes with the news that the citizens were mum, although he spoke of Edward's bastard children, and his secret alliance with Lady Elizabeth Lucy who had given him a child, and compared the virtues of Gloster with the sins of Edward with whom even their own wives were unsafe. True, Buckingham had taken the precaution of placing some ten of his own followers at the lower end of the hall to throw up their caps and cry: "God save King Richard", but even their pretended enthusiasm could not encourage the citizens to join with them. However, the Lord Mayor being at hand, Gloster and Buckingham set out to play their last scene in the comedy. The devout Duke of Gloster is in meditation with his God. He cannot be disturbed. Buckingham sends Catesby back to entreat an audience since it touched the general welfare. The message comes back that the Duke fears the citizens intend no good to him. Buckingham sends word back that they come in love, and then Gloster, having timed the situation to a nicety, appears above between two bishops. The persistent way in which Gloster declines the high honour which Buckingham and Catesby assure him the people wish him to take is masterly, and would have deceived a cleverer man than the Lord Mayor. At last, with a perfect gesture of self-sacrifice, when Buckingham pretends to give up the hopeless task, he relents, blaming them for putting such a load of cares upon him for which he had no desire and telling them that it is only their persistence that enforces him. So Buckingham proclaims him King, to which the Lord Mayor says Amen, and the coronation is fixed for the following day, and Gloster, with the saddest "farewell, gentle friends" to the citizens and his royal cousin, retires once more to his holy work with the bishops.

LONDON. BEFORE THE GATE OF THE TOWER.

This opening scene of the fourth act, though rarely played in the cut stage versions, is one of the saddest in Shakespeare. On one hand we have Queen Elizabeth with her son Dorset and the old Duchess of York, who meet Anne, Duchess of Gloster, leading little Margaret Plantagenet her niece, and Clarence's daughter.

Brakenbury, Lieutenant of the Tower, enters and forbids the royal ladies to visit the princes, saying that the King commands it. Elizabeth asks who is the King, and is told that Brakenbury meant to say the Lord Protector. Then Stanley enters saluting the Duchess of York as mother of two fair queens, and tells Anne to repair at once to Westminster to be crowned Richard's queen. Poor Anne is as wretched at this news as her relatives, and she goes knowing that her husband will soon be rid of her. Dorset goes to join Richmond, and Elizabeth to sanctuary. Elizabeth looks at the grim Tower and prays to it to use her babies well.

LONDON. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE PALACE.

This would assuredly be Westminster Palace to which the newly-crowned King would take his Queen after the coronation in the Abbey. But there is no mention of the Queen being in the Stateroom. Certainly Richard would not wish her there, and only had her crowned for appearances of doing the right thing. Having now gained what he had striven for, he puts Buckingham to the last test of loyalty to him, and whispers that the bastards in the Tower must die. Buckingham begs for time to consider the matter and leaves Richard angry. He then sends a page for Tyrrel, a discontented gentleman descended from the Walter Tyrrel whose arrow killed William Rufus. Richard then calls Catesby and tells him to spread the rumour that Anne was sick and like to die for he now had made up his mind that he must marry his niece, Elizabeth of York, in order to prevent Richmond from doing so. Tyrrel enters and undertakes the murder of the Princes, and then Buckingham re-enters to claim the earldom of Hereford. Richard, now resolved to be finished with Buckingham, tells him he is not in the giving vein, and on the departure of the Court attending Richard, Buckingham is left alone and knowing by the King's attitude that his life is in danger, flees to Brecknock.

LONDON. ANOTHER ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Tyrrel enters alone to tell the audience of the Princes' deaths. Acting as Chorus to the audience he recounts how even Dighton and Forrest, though "bloody dogs", wept like two children as they told him the manner of it. The King enters and is delighted at the news. He is in a good mood for such tidings as he has seen to it that Anne is also dead, leaving him free to woo Elizabeth. Catesby brings bad news, however, of Ely having fled to Richmond and Buckingham backed with a strong army against him.

Richard, ever a brave and talented soldier, calls for a muster of men and plans to take the field.

LONDON. BEFORE THE PALACE.

Westminster Palace with troops mustering outside it, and mounted knights in the great yard. An old woman is watching the preparations. She is hiding slyly in order to gloat over the sorrows of some of her enemies. Queen Elizabeth and the Duchess of York enter wailing their despair, and as they tell over their griefs, Margaret makes herself known and sets her wrongs against theirs. It is like a scene from a Greek Tragedy. It is well for Richard that Margaret takes her departure before his arrival, for as it is he has two enraged and grief-stricken women to cope with who greet him with curses. His mother he tries to drown with drums and trumpets. But his mother will be heard, and does not leave him till she has heaped curses on him. Elizabeth is about to follow Richard's mother but he calls her back, demanding speech with her. Then we get a scene as brilliant as his wooing of Anne by the coffin of Henry VI, and for sheer effrontery just as bad. In a very long battle of wits Richard's peculiar fascination overcomes the will of Queen Elizabeth and makes her go from him promising to do her best to win her daughter's love for him, her uncle. She allows him to kiss her, which makes Richard indulge in one of his jocular asides—"*Relenting fool, and shallow-changing woman.*"

Then follow a series of messages all bearing enmity to Richard. Buckingham in arms and Richmond growing strong. The messenger who rushes in and cries—"*My lord, the army of great Buckingham*" is interrupted with a blow, but when he goes on to say that it is dispersed by floods Richard apologizes and gives him his purse to cure the blow. Hearing that Buckingham is fled, he offers reward for his capture. Catesby immediately brings news that Buckingham is taken, but that the Earl of Richmond has landed a mighty power at Milford. So Richard rides to Salisbury.

LONDON. A ROOM IN LORD STANLEY'S HOUSE.

This is the fifth and last scene of this act, and the last London scene of the play. In letters which Stanley is sending to Richmond he explains that at the moment he cannot give him outward support since the crafty Richard, suspecting him of sympathy towards the cause of Richmond, has held his son George as a hostage for his father's good faith. Stanley actually ranged his

troops against Richard at Bosworth, but though order was given for George to be beheaded, the young man escaped in the confusion of battle and joined his father.

For the next LONDON SCENE in Shakespeare, we must pass on to *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth.* There is more dissension over this play than any of those commonly included amongst Shakespeare's works. Literary critics of each succeeding age have been divided into many camps. Some say Shakespeare wrote it: some that he didn't. Others give parts of it credit of having come from his pen: some say that he had no hand in it at all. There is also much uncertainty as to when it was written, and when first produced. There is a likelihood that it was first written to please Elizabeth, since the final scene is her christening and the tribute paid to her on that occasion. Also the theme of Anne Boleyn triumphing in beauty over the good Queen Katharine is a tribute to Elizabeth's mother. Apart from this, however, there would be a good deal of matter in the play that might have aroused the anger of Elizabeth. The audience could hardly fail to sympathize with Katharine, nor could they miss the hypocrisy of the King. The fear of Elizabeth's displeasure may have shelved the production till after her death, by which time, Shakespeare's name being the mascot of The Globe, the management, trading on the fact that he had done a certain amount of work on it in his earlier days, put his name to it as sole author without his permission, since he had retired to Stratford-on-Avon. That the original title was *All is True* with the sub-title *Some Practical Pieces of the Reign of Henry the Eighth* is an argument with many that this play had nothing to do with Shakespeare. But compare this with *As You Like It* or the sub-title *Twelfth Night, What You Will*, and there is not much difference. It is the same style of title, and we might even add "All's well that ends well!" Certainly, Shakespeare would not have been proud of the construction of this play. There is a lot of truth in what Pepys said of it:

> saw the so much cried up play of "Henry the Eighth", which though I went with resolution to like it, is so simple a thing made up of a great many patches, that, besides the shows and processions in it, there is nothing in the world good or well done!

However, there is no doubt at all about one thing. It was this play that caused the disastrous fire at The Globe. The fullest and most amusing account is in the form of a letter written by

Sir Henry Wotton to his nephew and dated the 6th of July 1613, two years after Shakespeare's retirement. It is worth quoting here in full.

> Now to let matters of state sleep, I will entertain you at the present with what happened this week at the Bankside. The king's players had a new play, called *All is True*, representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry the Eighth, which was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty even to the matting of the stage; the knights of the order, with their Georges and Garter, the guards with their embroidered coats and the like; sufficient, in truth, within a while to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous. Now King Henry, making a mask at the Cardinal Wolsey's house, and certain cannons being shot off at his entry, some of the paper, or other stuff wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the thatch, where, being thought at first but an idle smoke, and their eyes being more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train, consuming, within less than an hour, the whole house to the very ground. This was the fatal period of that virtuous fabric, wherein yet nothing did perish but wood and straw, and a few forsaken cloaks: only one man had his breeches set on fire, and that perhaps would have broiled him, if he had not, by the benefit of a provident wit, put it out with bottle ale.

Thomas Lurkin, whose letter to Sir Thomas Puckering is preserved in the Harleian Manuscripts, says:

> No longer since than yesterday, while Bourbage his company were acting at the Globe the play of *Henry VIII*, and there shooting of certain chambers in way of triumph, the fire catch'd.

Another account of this fire which may have destroyed Shakespeare's manuscripts, and dated 1613, says:

> Also upon S. Peter's day last the play-house or Theater, called the Globe, vpon the Banck-side, neere London, by negligent discharging of a peale of ordnance close to the south side thereof tooke fier, & the wind sodainly disperst ye flame round about, & in a very short space ye whole building was quite consumed, & no man hurt: the house being filled with people, to behold the play, viz. of "Henry the 8".

The scenes in *Henry VIII* are all laid in London with the exception of the one laid in Kimbolton. The play opens with—

LONDON. AN ANTE-CHAMBER IN THE PALACE.

Henry's favourite palace in the vicinity of London was the place of his birth, the Palace of Greenwich. The river served as his highway when he attended Westminster great functions. The Christmas Festival was held here during his reign, and it was very popular with his daughter Elizabeth, who was born there. This palace figures in the last act of this play without any doubt and will be dealt with then. The original palace of Whitehall was built by Henry, and he annexed Hampton Court, built by Wolsey, after the fall of his minister. Bridewell Palace, which lay between Baynard's Castle and the Temple, lodged Queen Katharine till her retirement to Kimbolton, and under the difficult circumstances of the divorce proceedings, it is obvious that Henry would not be holding Court under the same roof as the Queen. For hunting Henry loved Windsor, but when state affairs necessitated his presence in the capital, the Court would be more at Greenwich than in Westminster, since Henry looked upon it as his home. In the last act of the play we do not read the title GREENWICH but LONDON, so that Shakespeare included Greenwich in London. Therefore it seems more feasible that this opening scene should be an ante-chamber in the Greenwich Palace.

The Duke of Norfolk is describing the glories of The Field of the Cloth-of-Gold, and on the work of organization done by the Cardinal of York. Buckingham, supported by Abergavenny, shows his rancour against Wolsey, who soon enters in state. The stage direction says that the Cardinal fixes his eye on Buckingham, and Buckingham on him, both full of disdain. The audience are well prepared by Shakespeare for what is to follow, when Wolsey asks if the Duke of Buckingham's surveyor is in person ready, and on hearing that he is and that the secretary has his examination, goes off saying that Buckingham shall lessen his big look. Norfolk tries to pacify the enraged Duke, and dissuades him from going in rage to the King, when Brandon enters with a Sergeant-at-arms and Buckingham is arrested of High Treason. Abergavenny is arrested also and both are taken to the Tower.

LONDON. THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Henry enters leaning on the Cardinal's shoulder, is thanking him for saving his life against the Buckingham conspiracy, and he orders that the Duke's Surveyor shall be brought in for hearing. The sudden cry at this point of "Room for the Queen" and her being ushered in by the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk seem to suggest that her presence at this council was unexpected by Henry and the Cardinal. She comes to make an appeal on behalf

of the people against the exactions compelled by commissions sent amongst them. She maintains that the Cardinal is chiefly blamed as being the instigator, but that language unmannerly is also being used against the King. Norfolk agrees that rebellion has appeared, since the clothiers hit too hard by the taxation have been forced to throw out of work all those in their employ, such as spinners, carders, fullers, and weavers, which folk unable to turn their hands to other work are in revolt. Henry, who knew nothing of what the Queen has told him, declares that to tax a sixth part of a subject's substance is a trembling contribution, and must be stopped as against his pleasure. The wily Wolsey whispers his secretary to spread it amongst the people that the King has had the tax stopped through the intercession of the Cardinal. The Queen then intercedes for Buckingham, and warns the Surveyor against envy against the master who has discharged him, so that in this scene alone Wolsey has two causes to hate the Queen. In this plot, however, he is successful, since Henry pronounces Buckingham a traitor to the height. This scene certainly builds up the sympathy of the audience on the side of Katharine. And this sympathy is never killed, whatever the play may do in favour of Anne Boleyn. In fact the play wavers, first from one character to another, so that at times we cannot tell whose side the author or authors wish us to be on. We are sorry for Buckingham. We grieve for Wolsey in his fall. We cannot help this, when the good Griffith speaks so much good of him that even Katharine is moved to sorrow at his death. For Henry, too, our like and dislike keep changing places, and it is difficult to decide what the author really thought of him. He is at once hateful and lovable: mean and generous: but always royal even in buffoonery.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This scene is a skit upon the fashions of France. The Lord Chamberlain mentioned is Sir Charles Somerset, afterwards made Earl of Worcester. Lord Sands, to whom he talks, was his successor in office. This part is all too short, but in stage history it can claim to least one distinction. In 1885 when Wyndham produced the play in Edinburgh with Mrs. Wyndham as Queen Katharine, Sands was played by Toole, who later became the great comedian, and lifelong friend to Henry Irving. As a small boy I had the honour of pushing the bathchair along Hove front in which this great actor used to take the air each day. He was nearing his end and his mind was getting vague. But one morning

when my father was walking at his side and I was pushing, he asked me if I was fond of Shakespeare. I told him yes. "Ever played Lord Sands in *Henry VIII*?" he asked, and without waiting for my answer went on proudly, "because I have. A long time ago, boy, a long time ago." He and Irving were the first two actors I ever spoke to. Sir James Barrie, whose first play, *Walker, London*, was played by Toole, told me once that I would probably be as proud of that fact as of anything that might happen to me in life.

Lord Sands was the Standard-Bearer of England. Sir Thomas Lovell, who also appears in this scene, had been Chancellor of the Exchequer to Henry VII, and at Buckingham's execution was Constable of the Tower. A pleasant thing to note about this scene is that all three gentlemen concerned in it died peacefully, in a time when so many great ones lost their heads. The scene paves the way for the next, since the audience learn that they are on the way to the Cardinal's great supper, details of which Shakespeare gleaned from Cavendish. The three depart by barge along the Thames, praising Wolsey's liberality.

LONDON. THE PRESENCE-CHAMBER IN YORK PLACE.

This is Wolsey's London Palace, with a fine four-storied gate-house built at the King's order. The King had given it to the Cardinal, who called it York Place, the name being changed to Whitehall after Wolsey's fall.

We associate Whitehall today chiefly with the execution of Charles I, who walked out on to the scaffold outside the windows of the Banqueting Hall designed by the great Inigo Jones, and visitors to London gape at the royal panoply of the Horse Guards on the opposite side of the street. A great part of the original palace was burned down in the fire of 1698.

For the study of Shakespeare's text in this scene it is interesting to go to his source of information. Shakespeare, however, does not make Lord Sands the Chamberlain at this supper, and he omits the incident of Sir Edward Neville's likeness to Henry. He also makes this the occasion for Anne's first appearance. The mistake about Lord Sands is understandable, since the masque in question was in 1526, the year that Charles Somerset, Earl of Worcester, died, and, as Malone has stated, Shakespeare places the date of this scene as 1521.

Quoted from the *Life of Wolsey*, by Cavendish.

> And when it pleased the king's majesty, for his recreation, to repair unto the cardinal's house, as he did divers times in the year,

at which time there wanted no preparations, or goodly furniture, with viands of the finest sort that might be provided for money or friendship; such pleasures were then devised for the king's comfort and consolation as might be invented, or by man's wit imagined. The banquets were set forth, with masks and mummeries, in so gorgeous a sort and costly manner, that it was a heaven to behold. There wanted no dames or damsels meet or apt to dance with the maskers, or to garnish the place for the time, with other goodly disports. There was there all kind of music and harmony set forth, with excellent voices both of men and children. I have seen the king suddenly come in thither in a mask, with a dozen of other maskers, all in garments like shepherds, made of fine cloth-of-gold, and fine crimson satin paned, and caps of the same, with visors of good proportion of visnomy; their hair and beards either of fine gold wire, or else of silver, and some being of black silk; having sixteen torchbearers, besides their drums, and other persons attending upon them with visors, and clothed all in satin of the same colours. And at his coming, and before he came into the hall, ye shall understand that he came by water to the water-gate, without any noise; where, against his coming, were laid many chambers, and at his landing they were all shot off, which made such a rumble in the air that it was like thunder. It made all the noblemen, ladies and gentlemen, to muse what it should mean coming so suddenly, they sitting quietly at a solemn banquet; under this sort: First, ye shall perceive that the tables were set in the chamber of presence, banquet-wise covered, my lord cardinal sitting under the cloth of estate, and there having his service all alone; and then there was set a lady and a nobleman, or a gentleman and gentlewoman, throughout all the tables in the chamber on the one side, which were made and joined as if it were but one table. All which order and device was done and devised by the Lord Sands, lord chamberlain to the king; and also by Sir Henry Guilford, comptroller to the king. Then immediately after this great shot of guns the cardinal desired the lord chamberlain and comptroller to look what this sudden shot should mean, as though he knew nothing of the matter. They, thereupon looking out of the windows into Thames, returned again, and showed him that it seemed to them there should be some noblemen and strangers arrived at his bridge, as ambassadors from some foreign prince. With that quoth the cardinal, "I shall desire you, because ye can speak French, to take the pains to go down into the hall to encounter and to receive them according to their estates, and to conduct them into this chamber, where they shall see us, and all these noble personages, sitting merrily at our banquet, desiring them to sit down with us, and to take part of our fare and pastime." Then they went incontinent down into the hall, where they received them with twenty new torches, and conveyed them up into the chamber, with such a number of drums and fifes as I have seldom seen together at one time in any masque. At their arrival

into the chamber, two and two together, they went directly before the cardinal where he sat, saluting him very reverently; to whom the lord chamberlain for them said: "Sir, forasmuch as they be strangers, and can speak no English, they have desired me to declare unto your grace thus: 'They, having understanding of this your triumphant banquet, where was assembled such a number of excellent fair dames, could do no less, under the supportation of your good grace, but to repair hither to view as well their incomparable beauty, as far to accompany them at mumchance, and then after to dance with them, and so to have of them acquaintance.' And, sir, they furthermore require of your sweet grace licence to accomplish the cause of their repair." To whom the cardinal answered that he was very well contented they should do so. Then the maskers went first and saluted all the dames as they sat, and then returned to the most worthiest, and there opened a cup full of gold, with crowns and other pieces of coin, to whom they set divers pieces to cast at. Thus in this manner perusing all the ladies and gentlewomen, and to some they lost, and to some they won. And thus done, they returned unto the cardinal, with great reverence, pouring down all the crowns in the cup, which was about two hundred crowns. "At all," quoth the cardinal, and so cast the dice, and won them all at a cast; whereat was great joy made. Then quoth the cardinal to my lord chamberlain, "I pray you," quoth he, "show them that it seemeth me that there should be among them some noble man, whom I suppose to be much more worthy of honour to sit and occupy this room and place than I; to whom I would most gladly, if I knew him, surrender my place according to my duty." Then spake my lord chamberlain unto them in French, declaring my lord cardinal's mind, and they rounding him again in the ear, my lord chamberlain said to my lord cardinal, "Sir, sir, they confess," quoth he, "that among them there is such a noble personage, whom, if your grace can appoint him from the other, he is contented to disclose himself, and to accept your place most worthily." With that the cardinal, taking a good advisement among them, at the last quoth he, "Me seemeth the gentleman with the black beard should be even he." And with that he arose out of his chair, and offered the same to the gentleman in the black beard, with his cap in his hand. The person to whom he offered then his chair was Sir Edward Neville, a comely knight, of a goodly personage, that much more resembled the king's person in that mask than any other. The king, hearing and perceiving the cardinal so deceived in his estimation and choice, could not forbear laughing; but plucked down his visor, and Master Neville's also, and dashed out with such a pleasant countenance and cheer, that all noble estates there assembled, seeing the king to be there amongst them, rejoiced very much. The cardinal eftsoons desired his highness to take the place of estate; to whom the king answered that he would go first and shift his apparel; and so departed, and went straight into my lord's

> bedchamber, where was a great fire made and prepared for him, and there new apparelled him with rich and princely garments. And in the time of the king's absence the dishes of the banquet were clean taken up, and the tables spread again with new and sweet perfumed cloths; every man sitting still until the king and his maskers came in among them again, every man being newly apparelled. Then the king too his seat under the cloth of state, commanding no man to remove, but sit still, as they did before. Then in came a new banquet before the king's majesty, and to all the rest through the tables, wherein, I suppose, were served two hundred dishes or above, of wondrous costly meats and devices subtilly devised. Thus passed they forth the whole night with banqueting, dancing, and other triumphant devices, to the great comfort of the king, and pleasant regard of the nobility there assembled.

This vast amount of detail, so quaintly phrased, is concisely set forth in stage direction and dialogue. There is an authentic account of this incident in a letter of Spinelli, the Venetian secretary, and the supper in York Place would have been open to foreign ambassadors and their following. Anne Boleyn has but little dialogue in this scene, but in her conversation with Lord Sands she shows herself as a pert young woman, though being one of the waiting women in attendance of the Queen. In Henry's disfavour it must be said that he had already dishonoured Anne's elder sister, Mary, whom he had married to Sir William Cary in order to hush the matter up. Shakespeare has not given Anne a word to say directly to the King. Indeed the part is very small. She has an amusing gossip with the Old Lady in scene three of the second act, and appears as the central figure in her Coronation procession, while at the christening ceremony of Elizabeth she is absent in her own apartments, so that in the whole play she does not address one remark to the King.

LONDON. A STREET.

This would be a street in Westminster leading to the water-gate, and the two gentlemen are used by Shakespeare to explain the details of Buckingham's trial. On leaving the bar with the edge of the axe turned towards him, the unfortunate Duke went by barge as far as the Temple. For his beautiful description in the mouth of the First Gentleman, Shakespeare was indebted to Hall, who thus describes the end:

> The duke was brought to the bar sore chafing, and sweat marvellously; after he had made his reverence he paused awhile.

. . . On hearing sentence against him he says, "My lord of Norfolk, you have said as a traitor should be said unto, but I was never none; but, my lords, I nothing malign for that you have done to me, but the eternal God forgive you my death, as I do; I shall never sue to the king for life, howbeit he is a gracious prince, and more grace may come from him that I desire. I desire you, my lords, and all my fellows to pray for me."

Then was the edge of the axe turned towards him, and so led into a barge. Sir Thomas Lovell desired him to sit on the cushions and *carpet ordained for him*; he said, "Nay, for when I went to Westminster, I was Duke of Buckingham; now I am but Edward Bohun, the most caitiff of the world." Thus they landed at the Temple, where received him Sir Nicolas Vawse [Sir Nicholas Vaux in the play] and Sir William Sandes, Baronets, and led him through the city, who desired ever the people to pray for him, of whom some wept and lamented, and said, "This is the end of evil life. God forgive him! he was a proud prince; it is a pity that he behaved him so against his king and liege lord, whom God preserve. Thus about iiii of the clock he was brought as a cast man to the Tower.

Shakespeare, in the mouths of the gentlemen, leads his audience to believe that Buckingham's guilt was framed by the hatred of the cardinal. There is no hint here of "*This is the end of evil life!*" Certainly Buckingham's oration to the people as told by Shakespeare is the utterance of a good man, and whether he was traitor or no, as we listen to him in the theatre we free him from the charge.

LONDON. AN ANTE-CHAMBER IN THE PALACE.

Prepared by the speeches of the gentlemen at the close of the preceding scene, the audience now hear more of the King's determination for a divorce, and find it as unpopular with the nobles as with the commoners. The blame is fastened by them on the cardinal. He has just commandeered the Lord Chamberlain's horses, with the excuse that he will be served before a subject, if not before the King. When Norfolk, against the advice of the Lord Chamberlain, goes to find the King in order to put him away from sad thoughts, the stage direction says: "*Norfolk opens a folding door. The King is discovered sitting, and reading pensively.*" In Shakespeare's theatre the inner rooms were represented by the curtains being opened at the back upon the upper stage. In fact, the old direction of this piece of business says: "*Exit Lord Chamberlain, and the King drawes the Curtaine and sits reading pensively.*" From a stage point of view this is better since it gives more distance between the characters, and the

King's "*Who is there? Ha?*" is more natural for the actors. Suffolk is able to utter his aside without danger of the King overhearing him.

In this scene Campeius is introduced. It was not his first visit to England, for in 1519, two years after his being made cardinal, he had visited Henry on a mission from the Pope, and the King had given him the Bishopric of Salisbury, which he deprived him of when he prorogued the question of divorce. Gardiner is also introduced here as the new secretary of the King. He had held the post of secretary to Wolsey, and took over the duties of Doctor Pace, of whom Holinshed writes:

> About this time the king received into favour doctor Stephan Gardiner, whose service he vsed in matters of great secrecie and weight, admitting him in the room of doctor Pace, the which being continuallie abroad in ambassages, and the same oftentimes not much necessarie, by the cardinal's appointment, at length he took such grief therewith, that he fell out of his right wits.

Campeius tells Wolsey that the sending of Pace abroad had given people ill opinion of him, saying that Wolsey, fearing the doctor would rise by reason of his virtues, had purposely kept him abroad. Gardiner was Katharine's worst enemy, since it was he who obtained the commission from the Pope for the trial. To do Henry justice, he bestowed friendship and loyalty towards Gardiner through the trouble with Cranmer, who tried to fasten a charge of heresy upon the newly created Bishop of Winchester. But for the King's personal intervention, Gardiner would surely have fallen.

LONDON. AN ANTE-CHAMBER IN THE QUEEN'S APARTMENTS.

This is Anne Boleyn's one good scene in the play to which her name is so important, and so much discussed by other characters. The room in question would be from the stage direction, one of the ante-rooms of the Palace at Bridewell. The area of Bridewell lies between Fleet Street and the Thames, and its name is derived from a holy well that had been dedicated to St. Bride or Bridget. Edward VI gave the palace to the City of London to be used as a home of refuge. Later it became a House of Correction for vagrant women and apprentices that were idle. It stood till 1864, when, with the exception of its hall, it was demolished.

The characterization of this scene is reminiscent of Juliet and

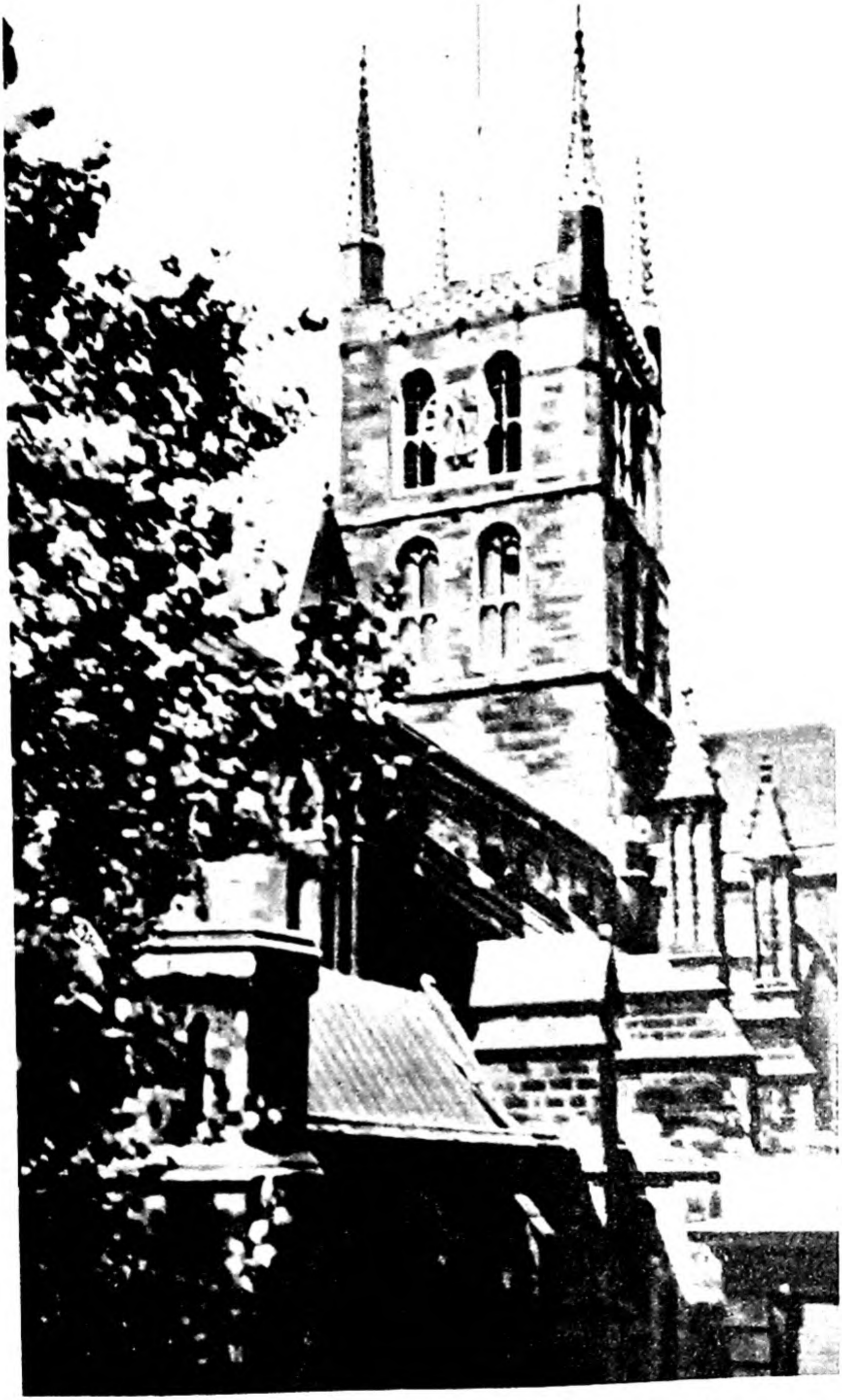
the Nurse, and Shakespeare, whose pen is surely obvious here as in so many other passages of this much discussed play, enjoys painting a naughty old lady of wit. Out of deference to Queen Elizabeth, Shakespeare is careful to show Anne Boleyn's pity for her royal mistress, Katharine.

It is in this room at Bridewell that the Lord Chamberlain announces that the King has created Anne the Marchioness of Pembroke with an income of a thousand pound a year out of the King's grace.

LONDON. A HALL IN BLACKFRIARS.

This famous scene of Katharine's trial was set in the Hall of the Dominicans, Henry thinking it the most convenient place for such learning, and no doubt he wished to heighten the effect in people's minds that it was wholly an ecclesiastical affair, with no complaint against the Queen's virtue, but a matter of his conscience pricking him as to the line of succession. The hall of a monastery would be the most convenient place to make this clear to all the good citizens of London. Who would dare to call in question the deliberations of so many learned men congregated in the Hall of the Black Friars? Shakespeare would have known the Hall well. In his mind's eye he may have seen the ghosts of that famous assembly filling their seats again. But for the detail of ceremony and speeches, he went to the memoirs of Cavendish. All through the account we can trace Shakespeare's reactions. We can see him weighing it up sentence by sentence, phrase by phrase. What to put into the mouths of his characters. What to leave to the business. Just as it is in the Masque Scene at York Place interesting to read the chronicle from which the author took his information, so is it here. Cavendish gives his account as follows:

> Ye shall understand, as I said before, that there was a court erected in the Blackfriars in London, where these two cardinals sat for judges. Now will I set you out the manner and order of the court there. First, there was a court placed with tables, benches, and bars, like consistory, a place judicial (for the judges to sit on). There was also a cloth of estate, under which sat the king; and the queen sat some distance beneath the king: under the judges' feet sat the officers of the court. The chief scribe there was Dr. Stephens (who was after Bishop of Winchester); the apparitor was one Cooke, most commonly called Cooke of Winchester. Then sat there within the said court, directly before the king and the judges, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Doctor Warham, and all the other bishops.



SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL, WHICH WAS SHAKESPEARE'S
PARISH CHURCH WHEN HE WORKED IN LONDON

WESTMINSTER HALL

Then at both the ends, with a bar made for them, the councillors on both sides. The doctors for the king were Doctor Sampson, that was after Bishop of Chichester, and Doctor Bell, who after was Bishop of Worcester, with divers other. The proctors on the king's part were Doctor Peter, who was after made the king's chief secretary, and Doctor Tregonell, and divers other.

Now on the other side stood the counsel for the queen—Doctor Fisher, Bishop of Rochester a very godly man and a devout person, who after suffered death at Tower Hill; the which was greatly lamented through all the foreign universities of Christendom. There was also another ancient doctor, called, as I remember, Doctor Ridley, a very small person in stature, but surely a great and excellent clerk in divinity.

The court being thus furnished and ordered, the judges commanded the crier to proclaim silence; then was the judges' commission, which they had of the pope, published and read openly before all the audience there assembled: that done the crier called the king, by the name of "King Henry of England, come into the court", &c. With that the king answered and said, "Here, my lords."

Then he called also the queen, by the name of "Katharine queen of England, come into the court", &c.; who made no answer to the same, but rose up incontinent out of her chair, where as she sat; and because she could not come directly to the king for the distance which severed them, she took pain to go about unto the king, kneeling down at his feet in the sight of all the court and assembly, to whom she said in effect, in broken English, as follows: "Sir," quoth she, "I beseech you for all the loves that have been between us, and for the love of God, let me have justice and right; take of me some pity and compassion, for I am a poor woman and a stranger born out of your dominion; I have here no assured friend, and much less indifferent counsel; I flee to you as to the head of justice within this realm. Alas! sir, wherein have I offended you, or what occasion of displeasure? Have I designed against your will and pleasure; intending, as I perceive, to put me from you? I take God and all the world to witness that I have been to you a true, humble, and obedient wife, ever comformable to your will and pleasure, never said or did anything to the contrary thereof, being always well pleased and contented with all things wherein you had any delight or dalliance, whether it were in little or much, I never grudged in word or countenance, or showed a visage or spark of discontentation. I loved all those whom ye loved only for your sake, whether I had cause or no, and whether they were my friends or my enemies. This twenty years I have been your true wife, or more, and by me ye have had divers children, although it hath pleased God to call them out of this world, which hath been no default in me. And when ye had me at the first, I take God to be my judge, I was a true maid without touch of man; and whether it be true or

no, I put it to your conscience. If there be any just cause by the law that ye can allege against me, either of dishonesty or any other impediment to banish and put me from you, I am well content to depart to my great shame and dishonour; and if there be none, then here I most lowly beseech you let me remain in my former estate, and receive justice at your hands. The king your father was in the time of his reign of such estimation through the world for his excellent wisdom, that he was accounted and called of all men the second Solomon; and my father Ferdinand King of Spain, who was esteemed to be one of the wittiest princes that reigned in Spain many years before were both wise and excellent kings in wisdom and princely behaviour. It is not therefore to be doubted but that they elected and gathered as wise councillors about them as to their high discretions was thought meet. Also, as me seemeth, there was in those days as wise, as well-learned men, and men of as good judgement, as be at this present in both realms, who thought then the marriage between you and me good and lawful; therefore it is a wonder to hear what new inventions are now invented against me, that never intended but honesty, and cause me to stand to the order and judgement of this new court, wherein ye may do me much wrong, if ye intend any cruelty; for ye may condemn me for lack of sufficient answer, having no indifferent counsel, but such as be assigned me, with whose wisdom and learning I am not acquainted. Ye must consider that they cannot be indifferent counsellors for my part which be your subjects, and taken out of your own council before, wherein they be made privy, and dare not, for your displeasure, disobey your will and intent, being once made privy thereto. Therefore, I most humbly require you, in the way of charity, and for the love of God, who is the best judge, to spare me the extremity of this new court, until I may be advertised what way and order my friends in Spain will advise me to take; and if ye will not extend to me so much indifferent favour, your pleasure then be fulfilled, and to God I commit my cause!"

And with that she rose up, making a low curtsy to the king, and so departed from thence. Many supposed that she would have resorted again to her former place; but she took her way straight out of the house, leaning, as she was wont always to do, upon the arm of her general receiver, called Master Griffith. And the king being advertised of her departure, commanded the crier to call her again, who called her by the name of "Katharine of England, come into the court", &c. With that quoth Master Griffith, "Madame, ye be called again." "On, on," quoth she, "it maketh no matter, for it is no indifferent court for me, therefore I will not tarry. Go on your ways." And thus she departed out of that court, without any further answer at that time, or at any other, nor would never appear at any other court after.

The king, perceiving that she was departed in such sort, calling to his grace's memory all her lament words that she had pro-

nounced before him and all the audience, said thus in effect: "Forasmuch", quoth he, "as the queen is gone, I will, in her absence, declare unto you all my lords here present assembled, she hath been to me as true, as obedient, and as conformable a wife as I could in my fantasy wish or desire. She hath all the virtuous qualities that ought to be in a woman of her dignity, or in any other of baser estate. Surely she is also a noblewoman born: if nothing were in her but only her conditions, will well declare the same."

With that quoth my lord cardinal: "Sir I most humbly beseech your highness to declare me before all this audience, whether I have been the chief inventor or first mover of this matter unto your majesty: for I am greatly suspected of all men herein."

"My lord cardinal," quoth the king, "I can well excuse you herein. Marry," quoth he, "ye have been rather against me in attempting or setting forth thereof. And to put you all out of doubt, I will declare unto you the special cause that moved me hereunto; it was a certain scrupulosity that pricked my conscience upon divers words that were spoken at a certain time by the Bishop of Bayonne, the French king's ambassador, who had been here long upon the debating of a marriage to be concluded between the princess, our daughter Mary, and the Duke of Orleans, the French king's second son. And upon the resolution and determination thereof, he desired respite to advertise the king his master thereof, whether our daughter Mary should be legitimate in respect of the marriage which was sometime between the queen here and my brother the late prince Arthur. These words were conceived within my scrupulous conscience, that it bred a doubt within my breast, which doubt pricked, vexed, and troubled so my mind, and so disquieted me, that I was in great doubt of God's indignation; which, as seemed me, appeared right well; much the rather for that he hath not sent me any issue male; for all such issue male as I have received of the queen died incontinent after they were born; so that I doubt the punishment of God in that behalf. Thus being troubled in waves of a scrupulous conscience and partly in despair of any issue male by her, it drave me at last to consider the estate of this realm, and the danger it stood in for lack of issue male to succeed me in this imperial dignity. I thought it good, therefore, in relief of the weighty burden of scrupulous conscience, and the quiet estate of this noble realm, to attempt the law therein, and whether I might take another wife in case that my first copulation with this gentlewoman were not lawful; which I intend not for any carnal concupiscence, nor for any displeasure or mislike of the queen's person or age, with whom I could be as well content to continue during my life, if our marriage may stand with God's laws, as with any woman alive; in which point consisteth all this doubt that we go now about to try by the learned wisdom and judgement of you our prelates and pastors of this realm here assembled for that purpose; to whose conscience and judgement I

have committed the charge, according to the which, God willing, we will be right well contented to submit ourself, to obey the same for our part. Wherein after I once perceived my conscience wounded with the doubtful case herein, I moved first this matter in confession to you, my Lord of Lincoln, my ghostly father. And forasmuch as you yourself were in some doubt to give me counsel, moved me to ask further counsel of you all, my lords; wherein I moved you first, my Lord of Canterbury, axing your licence (forasmuch as you were our metropolitan) to put this matter in question; and so I did all of you, my lords, to the which ye have all granted by writing under all your seals, the which I have here to be showed."

"That is truth, if it please your highness," quoth the Bishop of Canterbury; "I doubt not but all my brethren here present will affirm the same."

"No, sir, not I," quoth the Bishop of Rochester, "ye have not my consent thereto." "No! hath he!" quoth the king; "look upon this: is not this your hand and seal?" and showed him the instrument with seals.

"No, forsooth, sire," quoth the Bishop of Rochester, "it is not my hand nor seal!" To that quoth the king to my Lord of Canterbury, "Sir, how say ye? is not this his hand and seal?"

"Yes, sir," quoth my Lord of Canterbury.

"That is not so," quoth the Bishop of Rochester, "for indeed you were in hand with me to have both my hand and seal, as other of my lords had already done; but then I said to you that I would never consent to such an act, for it were much against my conscience; nor my hand and seal should never be seen at any such instrument, God willing; with much more matter touching the same communication between us."

"You say truth," quoth the Bishop of Canterbury; "such words ye said unto me; but at the last ye were fully persuaded that I should for you subscribe your name, and put to a seal myself, and ye would allow the same."

"All which words and matter," quoth the Bishop of Rochester, "under your correction, my lord, and supportation of this noble audience, there is nothing more untrue."

"Well, well," quoth the king, "it shall make no matter; we will not stand with you to argument herein, for you are but one man." And with that the court was adjourned until the next day of this session.

Shakespeare does not use the incident of the Bishop of Rochester's objection. He preferred, out of deference to Elizabeth, to make the opposition and delay come from Cardinal Campeius rather than stress this point from an English Bishop. In the last speech of the act, Henry perceives that the cardinals are trifling

with him, and in his abhorrence of delay, he longs for Cranmer's return, who he knows will use his learning for his own comfort. On the one hand he sees Katharine appealing to the Pope, which would cause more tricks from Rome, and on the other, Anne Boleyn made his lawful wife, with Cranmer's help. So, in the play, Henry breaks up the court, which in history actually sat from May the thirty-first till July the twenty-third of the following year.

LONDON. PALACE AT BRIDEWELL. A ROOM IN THE QUEEN'S APARTMENT.

This act opens with Katharine at work with her ladies, and listening to that lovely song, "Orpheus with his lute".

By this time Anne Boleyn is no longer one of the Queen's following. As Marchioness of Pembroke, she has been given lodgings near to the King's Palace at Greenwich. Shakespeare once more takes advantage of the narrative of Cavendish, who describes the visit of the two Cardinals to the Palace of Bridewell.

And then my lord rose up and made him ready, taking his barge, and went straight to Bath Place to the other cardinal, and so went together unto Bridewell, directly to the queen's lodging: and they, being in her chamber of presence, showed to the gentleman usher that they came to speak with the queen's grace. The gentleman usher advertised the queen thereof incontinent. With that she came out of her privy chamber with a skein of white thread about her neck, into the chamber of presence, where the cardinals were giving of attendance upon her coming. At whose coming quoth she, "Alack, my lords, I am very sorry to cause you to attend upon me; what is your pleasure with me?"

"If it please you," quoth my lord cardinal, "to go into your privy chamber, we will show you the cause of our coming."

"My lord," quoth she, "if you have anything to say, speak it openly before all these folks, for I fear nothing that ye can say or allege against me, but that I would all the world should both hear and see; therefore I pray you speak your minds openly."

Then began my lord to speak to her in Latin. "Nay, my good lord," quoth she, "speak to me in English I beseech you; although I understand Latin." "Forsooth, then," quoth my lord, "Madam, if it please your grace, we come both to know your mind, how ye be disposed to do in this matter between the king and you, and also to declare secretly our opinions and our counsel unto you, which we have intended of very zeal and obedience that we bear to your grace."

"My lords, I thank you then," quoth she, "of your good wills;

but to make answer to your request I cannot so suddenly, for I was set among my maidens at work, thinking full little of any such matter, wherein there needeth a longer deliberation, and a better head than mine, to make answer to so noble wise men as ye be; I had need of good counsel in this case, which toucheth me so near; and for any counsel or friendship that I can find in England, they are nothing to my purpose or profit. Think you, I pray you, my lords, will any Englishman counsel or be friendly unto me against the king's pleasure, they being his subjects? Nay, forsooth, my lords! and for my counsel in whom I do intend to put my trust be not here; they be in Spain, my native country. Alas, my lords! I am a poor woman lacking both wit and understanding sufficiently to answer such approved wise men as ye be both, in so weighty a matter. I pray you to extend your good and indifferent minds in your authority unto me, for I am a simple woman, destitute and barren of friendship and counsel here in a foreign region; and as for your counsel, I will not refuse, but be glad to hear."

And with that she took my lord by the hand, and led him into her privy chamber, with the other cardinal, where they were in long communication: we, in the other chamber, might sometime hear the queen speak very loud, but what it was we could not understand. The communication ended, the cardinals departed and went directly to the king, making to him relation of their talk with the queen, and after resorted home to their houses to supper.

LONDON. ANTE-CHAMBER TO THE KING'S APARTMENT.

This is the second and last scene of Act III. Out of this play made up of pageant and historic episodes, this scene towers above its fellows. The fall of Wolsey is magnificently conceived, though Shakespeare has taken great liberties with the truth. Actually the carelessness of Wolsey putting the wrong papers in the packet for the King is untrue. Holinshed tells us the source, from which Shakespeare eventually took it, not able to resist such a dramatic climax. Wolsey himself ruined another by the very trick which Shakespeare makes ruin him. The real story concerned Thomas Ruthall, who had been given the bishopric of Durham by Henry VII. Henry VIII admitted him to his privy council. He was supposed to be the richest subject in the land, and being continually about the Court, had no time to attend to the affairs of his bishopric. Owing to his great knowledge of finance and management, the King commanded him to write a book showing the whole estate of the kingdom. When the book was completed the Bishop had it bound in white vellum for the King's acceptance. Unfortunately, the good bishop had two books bound in white vellum, and by ill-luck they happened to

be of the same size and bulk. In length, breadth, and thickness and under the same covers with very similar titles, it was difficult to tell which was which, especially as they both dealt with the subject of summing up estate values. The other book happened to deal with the bishop's personal wealth, and he carelessly left them lying together in his study. Hearing that the book was completed, the King sent Cardinal Wolsey to go and collect it. The bishop sent one of his servants to fetch it from his study, but forgot that his own book was also completed, and that it was lying by its companion volume, at such and such a spot. Intent upon entertaining the Cardinal, the Bishop gave no heed to the book which his servant brought him, but handed it over to Wolsey, who took it to his own house, determining to read it before delivering it to the King. In the privacy of his study, he discovered the mistake made by the Bishop of Durham. Here was an account of such wealth that it rivalled the privy purse of the King. The Cardinal had no scruples in taking it to Henry in great glee and using it to overthrow the Bishop, whose wealth he had always coveted for himself. He told Henry that should His Majesty ever be destitute for money, he need go no farther than to the coffers of Durham, and help himself to some of the hundred thousand pounds collected there. When the Bishop heard what had passed between Henry and Wolsey he ended his life in London. This occurred in 1523.

Shakespeare can be excused for transferring this incident to the Cardinal, since it makes his fall the more sudden on the stage. But the real cause of his fall was undoubtedly the failure of the Cardinals to bring about a speedy divorce. In managing this to the King's liking, Cranmer firmly established himself. Cavendish tells us that after Cardinal Campeggio had left England, Wolsey returned to his house in Westminster, which would be Whitehall, or York Place. At the beginning of the Michaelmas term he went to Westminster Hall and sat as usual in the chancery. But he only sat there for one day's debating, for he guessed how matters stood between him and the King. Two days later he was visited at York Place by the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, who informed him that it was the King's pleasure he should retire to Asher House, an estate belonging to the bishopric of Winchester, situated near to his own Hampton Court, and that he should immediately hand over to the King the Great Seal of England, which he had held for the King as Lord Chancellor. Wolsey arrogantly demanded their authority in written commission. The Dukes

replied that it was sufficient that they carried the King's command from his own mouth. Wolsey replied that this was not sufficient in so great a matter since he possessed letters patent signed by the King, declaring that the office of Chancellor was his to enjoy during his life. The Dukes, after high words, journeyed to Windsor to inform the King of the Cardinal's stubborn attitude, and the next day returned to York Place with the King's commands in writing. Apparently Wolsey took defeat in good part, although it meant handing over all his amassed wealth and properties. When the Dukes departed again for Windsor, Wolsey commanded his servants to make an inventory of every penny he possessed, for handing over to the master who had given to him so freely. Cavendish reports his words at the termination of this sad business :

> "Well, well, Master Kingston," quoth he, "I see the matter against me, how it is framed ; but if I had served God as diligently as I have done the King, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs."

Here Shakespeare shows himself the great improver of other men's writings and sayings. In the play Wolsey addresses Cromwell with the same matter but raised to the highest pinnacle of poetic utterance :

> O Cromwell, Cromwell !
> Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
> I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies.

The calm resignation of his mind at once captures the sympathy of the audience. Shakespeare even makes him speak well of his successor. When Cromwell tells him that Sir Thomas More has been chosen Lord Chancellor in his place, he answers :

> That's somewhat sudden :
> But he's a learned man. May he continue
> Long in his highness' favour, and do justice
> For truth's sake and his conscience ; that his bones
> When he has run his course and sleeps in blessings,
> May have a tomb of orphans' tears wept on 'em.

His last act was generous. He praises the King's noble nature and recommends Cromwell to his service. But it was

to be a case of like master like man with Cromwell. He climbed to power through the favour of the King. Like Wolsey, he was loaded with honours and preferments, managing to line his own coffers from innumerable pickings. Ruling everything and all-powerful, he incurred the jealousy of the nobles as Wolsey had done before him. His fate was more cruel, though, for instead of dying by nature, as Wolsey did, he was executed on Tower Hill.

LONDON. A STREET IN WESTMINSTER.

This is the first scene of the fourth act, and once more the two gentlemen are used as Chorus to the audience. They are come to take their stand in order to view the coronation of Anne Boleyn. So that the audience should know who was who in the elaborate order of procession, which was of course only detailed in stage direction, the gentlemen point out the nobles and give their titles. Then a third gentleman comes to tell them of the service in the Abbey. The account of this ceremony Shakespeare took from Holinshed:

> When she was thus brought to the high place made in the middest of the church, between the quéere and the high altar, she was set in a rich chaire. And after that she had rested awhile, she descended downe to the high altar and there prostrate hir selfe while the archbishop of Canterburie said certaine collects: then she rose, and the bishop annointed hir on the head and on the brest, and then she was led vp againe, where after diuerse orisons said, the archbishop set the crowne of saint Edward on hir head, and then diliured hir the scepter of gold in hir right hand, and the rod of iuorie with the doue in the left hand, and then the quéere soong Te Deum.

In honour of Elizabeth, Shakespeare makes much of Anne's beauty, not agreeing with a critic of the time who said that Madame Anne was not one of the handsomest women in the world, and had nothing in her favour but the King's great appetite, and her eyes, which were black and beautiful. Cranmer, however, left a tribute to her hair, which he described as long and flowing, as though she were sitting in a horse-litter. In the mouths of these gentlemen on the stage, Shakespeare's praise of Elizabeth's mother could not be more extravagant: "*The sweetest face I ever look'd on.*" She is also compared to the riches of the Indies, and the enthusiasm of the crowd is hysterical with her loveliness. They also tell of the rapid rise to fame of Cromwell,

which I think Shakespeare put in on purpose to remind the audience of the fate of Anne. She can well be compared with Thomas Cromwell, for in her case it was a situation of like mistress like maid. As a lady-in-waiting she had usurped her Queen's place, as she was later to be usurped by Jane Seymour, who was one of her own maids.

LONDON. A GALLERY IN THE PALACE.

This, the opening scene of the last act, is, of course, Greenwich, and the purpose of this and the other scenes that follow is to give full praise and detail of Elizabeth's birth. The second theme of this act is given to the quarrel and forced reconciliation between Cranmer and Gardiner, both of whom shared the King's best favour, though the latter's attitude towards the Archbishop was not approved by Henry. Indeed, but for the birth of Elizabeth, which puts Henry in the best humour, things might have gone hard with the Bishop of Winchester.

This scene shows Henry giving his full trust to Cranmer, and at the same time behaving as any ordinary man about to be made a father. The old lady who brings him the news of the birth is the same jocular old dame whom we have seen before with Anne Boleyn. It amused her to compare the new-born child to the King, with her: "*As like you as cherry is to cherry!*" for the King having supped well was probably very red in the face. Her attitude is that of all elderly women on such occasions who have charge of the sickroom. Disgusted with the hundred marks as a reward for such good news, she follows the King to get more, or give him a piece of her mind. We only wish that Shakespeare had written in the results.

LONDON. THE LOBBY BEFORE THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

In Shakespeare's theatre this scene would be played on the lower stage, with the curtains of the inner or higher stage drawn and guarded by the doorkeeper. We see Cranmer refused admission till summoned, and we see the King and his physician, Doctor Butts, the witnesses of it from a window above, which would be from one of the sections of the tiring-house gallery. Some editors prefer to title this and the next scene as one, but the act is usually divided into five scenes.

LONDON. THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

In the council things appear to be going hard with the Archbishop but the audience know more than his enemies. They

know that he carries the King's ring upon his finger, and that Henry is ready to declare himself upon Cranmer's side. Both these situations are handled dramatically. Actually, the occurrence took place long after the birth of Elizabeth, but Shakespeare uses it to build up to his last scene. He does not go to Holinshed for his information, but to one of the most popular books of his time, *Foxe's Acts and Monuments*, commonly known as *The Book of Martyrs*.

This account is so full and throws such light upon the complex character of Henry that it is worth inserting in order that the reader may compare it with Shakespeare's version.

> When night came, the king sent Sir Anthony Denny about midnight to Lambeth to the archbishop, willing him forthwith to resort unto him at the court. The message done, the archbishop speedily addressed himself to the court, and coming into the gallery, where the king walked and tarried for him, his highness said, "Ah, my lord of Canterbury, I can tell you news. For divers weighty considerations it is determined by me and the council, that you tomorrow at nine of the clock shall be committed to the Tower, for that you and your chaplains (as information is given us) have taught and preached, and thereby sown within the realm such a number of execrable heresies, that it is feared, the whole realm being infected with them, no small contention and commotions will rise thereby amongst my subjects, as of late days the like was in divers parts of Germany, and therefore the council have requested me, for the trial of the matter, to suffer them to commit you to the Tower, or else no man dare come forth as witness in those matters, you being a counsellor."
>
> When the king had said his mind, the archbishop kneeled down, and said, "I am content, if it please your grace, with all my heart, to go thither at your highness' commandment; and I must humbly thank your majesty that I may come to my trial, for there be that have many ways slandered me, and now this way I hope to try myself not worthy of such report."
>
> The king, perceiving the man's uprightness, joined with such simplicity, said, "Oh Lord, what manner o' man be you? What simplicity is in you? I had thought that you would rather have sued to us to have taken the pains to have heard you and your accusers together for your trial, without any such indurance. Do you not know what state you be in with the whole world, and how many great enemies you have? Do you not consider what an easy thing it is to procure three or four false knaves to witness against you? Think you to have better luck that way than your master Christ had? I see by it you will run headlong to your undoing, if I would suffer you. Your enemies shall not so prevail against

you; for I have otherwise devised with myself to keep you out of their hands. Yet, notwithstanding, tomorrow when the council shall sit, and send for you, resort unto them, and if, in charging you with this matter, they do commit you to the Tower, require of them, because you are one of them, a counsellor, that you may have your accusers brought before them without any further indurance, and use for yourself as good persuasions that way as you may devise; and if no entreaty or reasonable request will serve, then deliver unto them this my ring (which then the king delivered unto the archbishop), and say unto them, If there be no remedy, my lords, but that I must go to the Tower, then I revoke my cause from you, and appeal to the king's own person by this token unto you all; for (said the king then unto the archbishop) so soon as they shall see this ring, they know it so well that they shall understand that I have reserved the whole cause into mine own hands and determination, and that I have discharged them thereof! The archbishop, perceiving the king's benignity so much to him wards, had much ado to forbear tears. "Well," said the king, "go your ways, my lord, and do as I have bidden you." My lord, humbling himself with thanks, took his leave of the king's highness for that night.

On the morrow, about nine of the clock before noon, the council sent a gentleman usher for the archbishop, who, when he came to the council-chamber door, could not be let in, but of purpose (as it seemed) was compelled there to wait among the pages, lackeys, and servingmen all alone. D. Butts, the king's physician, resorting that way, and espying how my lord of Canterbury was handled, went to the king's highness, and said, "My lord of Canterbury, if it please your grace, is well promoted: for now he is become a lackey or a servingman, for yonder he standeth this half-hour at the council-chamber door amongst them." "It is not so (quoth the king), I trow, nor the council hath not so little discretion as to use the metropolitan of the realm in that sort, especially being one of their own number. But let them alone (said the king) and we shall hear more soon."

Anon the archbishop was called into the council chamber, to whom was alleged as before is rehearsed. The archbishop answered in like sort as the king had advised him; and in the end, when he perceived that no manner of persuasion or entreaty could serve, he delivered them the king's ring, revoking his cause into the king's hands. The whole council being thereat somewhat amazed, the earl of Bedford, with a loud voice, confirming his words with a solemn oath, said: "When you first began the matter, my lords, I told you what would become of it. Do you think that the king would suffer this man's finger to ache? Much more (I warrant you) will he defend his life against brabling varlets. You do not cumber yourselves to hear tales and fables against him." And incontinently upon the receipt of the king's token they all rose, and

carried to the king his ring, surrendering that matter, as the order and use was, into his own hands.

When they were all come to the king's presence, his highness, with a severe countenance, said unto them, "Ah, my lords, I thought I had wiser men of my council than now I find you. What discretion was this in you thus to make the primate of the realm, and one of you in office, to wait at the council-chamber door amongst servingmen? You might have considered that he was a counsellor as well as you, and you had no such commission of me so to handle him. I was content that you should try him as a counsellor, and not as a mean subject. But now I well perceive that things be done against him maliciously, and if some of you might have had your minds, you would have tried him to the uttermost. But I do you all to wit, and protest, that if a prince may be beholding unto his subject (and so solemnly laying his hand upon his breast, said), by the faith I owe to God, I take this man here, my lord of Canterbury, to be of all other a most faithful subject unto us, and one to whom we are much beholding, giving him great commendations otherwise." And with that, one or two of the chiefest of the council, making their excuse, declared, that in requesting his indurance, it was rather meant for his trial and his purgation against the common fame and slander of the world, than for any malice conceived against him.

"Well, well, my lords (quoth the king), take him, and well use him, as he is worthy to be, and make no more ado." And with that, every man caught him by the hand, and made fair weather of altogethers, which might easily be done with that man.

The scene ends with Henry's impatience to have the baby Elizabeth made a Christian, and as a special honour to Cranmer after the ill-treatment he has received from his colleagues in council, Henry asks him to stand godfather and answer for her. After this honour, the Bishop of Winchester is ordered to embrace Cranmer, which he does.

LONDON. THE PALACE YARD.

This is the inner courtyard of the Palace of Greenwich, through whose gates the crowd have surged, eager to get a glimpse of the Christening, and, as the porter suggests, no doubt to share in some free cakes and ale. In his first speech he mentions parish garden. It is often edited as Paris-garden, which is its true meaning. The Paris Garden, which was remarkable enough to be distinguished in the maps of London in Elizabethan days, was situated on Bankside, in Southwark, west of the Falcon Inn and between the Swan Theatre and the Thames.

It was the popular bear-baiting garden of London, and named after Robert de Paris, who had a house and garden there in the reign of Richard II. It was exactly opposite the Palace at Bridewell across the river. There are two other interesting London localities alluded to in this scene. One is the TRIBULATION OF TOWER HILL, and the other the LIMBS OF LIMEHOUSE. Johnson suggests that "The Tribulation" was a puritanical meeting-house, and since Shakespeare calls the limbs of Limehouse, their dear brothers, these were another fraternity of puritans who no doubt were used to the thunderings and bellowings of their preachers. Shakespeare meant in this passage to describe an audience that was used to plenty of noise. Stevens suggested that the puritans, who hated the playhouse, were able to endure the youths that thunder and fight for bitten apples, because it would disturb those in the audience who sinfully enjoyed listening to the play. The scene of the crowd is put in so that the procession to the christening would have time to be formed. The trumpets are sounded off-stage in good time for the crowd to get into place. Shakespeare was a good stage manager.

LONDON. THE PALACE.

The christening of the Princess Elizabeth and the procession of ceremony is the last pageant of this historical play. The chronicler Hall describes it in some detail as follows:

> The godfather was the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; the godmothers were the old Duchess of Norfolk and the old Marchioness of Dorset, widows; and the child was named Elizabeth: and after that all thing was done, at the church-door the child was brought to the fount, and christened, and this done, Garter chief king of arms cried aloud, "God of his infinite goodness, send prosperous life and long to the high and mighty Princess of England Elizabeth"; and then the trumpets blew, then the child was brought up to the altar, and the Gospel said over it; and after that the Archbishop of Canterbury confirmed it, the Marchioness of Exeter being godmother, then the Archbishop of Canterbury gave to the Princess a standing cup of gold: the Duchess of Norfolk gave to her a standing cup of gold, fretted with pearl: the Marchioness of Dorset gave three gilt bowls, pounced, with a cover: and the Marchioness of Exeter gave three standing bowls, graven, all gilt, with a cover!

Cranmer's speech is the courtly tact of Shakespeare, and the references to James after his praise of Elizabeth is the clever

tribute of a courtier, who knew how to please his patron. In closing the London scenes of the Histories, we must own that it is a pitiful as well as a grand pageant. Grandeur and horror mixed. Noble men sent to the Tower and executed, some for their principles and some for their ambitions cut down on discovery. Plots and schemings. Cruelties and mercies. All blended into one word, England.

Chapter Four

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN KENT

KENT, being the nearest highroad to London from the Continent, has for this reason played perhaps the most important part in English history of all our other counties. Dover, being the nearest port for France, has been throughout the centuries THE KEY TO ENGLAND. The precipitous white cliffs that rise from the sea were built by Nature, as Britain's bulwarks against the invasion of old-time warfare. Since Shakespeare uses this sea-bound fortress in his plays, we shall deal with it later; but let us say now that the two hundred and fifty foot summit of chalk known now as SHAKESPEARE'S CLIFF is the grandest monument to his name that we possess in England. Besides the possession of the KEY TO ENGLAND, Kent holds the ecclesiastical capital, Canterbury, and the important Bishopric at Rochester, and she shares with Essex the broad mouth of the Thames. It is a country built by Nature to protect London. Although Shakespeare's writings belong to the England that he loved, most of the plays have foreign settings, and it is to the Histories or Chronicle Plays that we turn to find his chief British scenes. Apart from these, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* deals entirely with that royal borough and its parkland: *King Lear* is laid in a very mythical Britain: *Cymbeline*, with its scene title of *Sometimes in Britain, Sometimes in Italy*, shows us a later Britain: while *Macbeth* is laid in Scotland and England.

The first scene in Kent that we find in the Histories is the first scene of the second act of the *First Part* of *King Henry IV*.

ROCHESTER. AN INN YARD.

Perhaps the uncertainty as to whether Shakespeare ever visited Rochester is a good thing, for in this scene he has said no good of it, but much evil. We find in this scene no mention of this city's splendid historical significance. There is no talk of its Castle or Cathedral, but much spiteful gossip against its Inn. Today neither THE BULL nor THE KING'S HEAD claim any association with the poet who could write: "*I think this be the most villainous house in all London road for fleas.*" They prefer to bow the knee to Charles Dickens, who loved the city

dearly. Shakespeare's line would not be a good advertising slogan for the most historic inn. Had he but said one good word for the night's lodging, it would have been useful to mine host of today. That the *house is turned upside down since Robin ostler died* perhaps shows that the particular inn had seen better days but was on the down grade. The Chamberlain himself is not the man to boast of either, since he proves himself a thorough-paced scoundrel. And yet with pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London with fat purses, one would have thought that Rochester, being a natural halting-place upon the Pilgrims' Way, would have comfortable accommodation for man and beast. It is quite likely that Shakespeare did spend a night in Rochester, and quite possible that his sleep may have been disturbed by a flea left behind by a former lodger in his room, and that the dialogue in this scene was his form of retaliation. My excuse for finding such excuse is that I happened to be born in Rochester and love it, as all must who know it well, and I could wish that Shakespeare had been more kindly disposed towards it. Indeed, it seems strange that in the multitude of historical places that go to make up his scenes, Rochester, so famed in all ages, should only figure this once upon his titles, and Canterbury not at all. I am sure that there could have been no fleas at THE BULL when Queen Victoria stayed the night there, or she would not have allowed them the privilege of changing their title to THE BULL AND VICTORIA HOTEL. One cannot use Queen Elizabeth's visit in the same defence, for on her progress to Rochester she informed Richard Watts, the local philanthropist, that she would be his guest for the night. When the good Watts excused his hospitality which he wished could have been more in keeping with Her Majesty's might, she is reported to have said the word, "*Satis*", and the house has since been known as *Satis House*. It was this same Watts who endowed the quaint Hostel in the High Street, and we can read the curious notice over the door today:

Richard Watts, Esq.
by his Will, dated, 22 Aug., 1579
founded this Charity
for Six poor Travellers,
who not being Rogues, or Proctors,
May receive gratis for one Night,
Lodging, Entertainment,
and Fourpence each.

DICKENS immortalized this bequest in his story, *The Seven Poor Travellers*. This was only one of the many good things with which Watts enriched his city.

Though Rochester does not gain much from Shakespeare in this scene, the one following immortalizes a hill outside it.

KENT. THE ROAD BY GADSHILL.

This spirited scene of low comedy is written and conceived in the dramatist's best vein.

Here we see Falstaff at his best, because he is always at his best when suffering misfortune. Poins having removed Falstaff's horse, the fat knight is complaining of being afoot, and there is something comically pathetic in his plea of "*I prithee, good Prince Hal, help me to my horse, good king's son!*" But the Prince's sharp retort of "*Out, you rogue! Shall I be your ostler?*" is met with the true Falstaffian reply: "*Go, hang thyself in thine own heir-apparent garters!*"

When Gadshill, Bardolph, and Peto come in with the news that there are rich travellers coming down the hill to the number of eight or ten, Falstaff naïvely asks: "*Zounds, will they not rob us?*" This is the glorious cowardice of Falstaff that we love, for he immediately owns that although no John of Gaunt, he is yet no coward, but he takes care to let his fellows in crime chase and tie up the travellers, while he encourages them loudly from the back. Poor Falstaff, in the very act of sharing out the booty stolen from the travellers, and no doubt thinking of the good cheer it will provide in Eastcheap, is set upon in the dark by the Prince and Poins, and after a blow or two, according to the stage directions, runs away.

The spot of this fictitious encounter is marked today by the old inn, called the SIR JOHN FALSTAFF. On the south side of the road is GADSHILL HOUSE. Dickens bought this lovely home in 1856 and died there in 1870. To encourage ambition in the young, the romantic story of how Dickens as a boy longed to live in such a place and years later was able to purchase it cannot be repeated too often. His joy at the possession and his veneration for Shakespeare may be gathered from one of his letters describing his house.

> At this present moment I am on my little Kentish freehold, looking on as pretty a view out of my study window as you will find in a long day's English ride. My little place is a grave red brick house, which I have added to and stuck bits upon in all manner

> of ways, so that it is as pleasantly irregular, and as violently opposed to all architectural ideas, as the most hopeful man could possibly desire. The robbery was committed before the door, on the man with the treasure, and Falstaff ran away from the identical spot of ground now covered by the room in which I write. A little rustic ale-house, called the Sir John Falstaff, is over the way—has been over the way ever since, in honour of the event. Cobham Park and Woods are behind the house: the distant Thames in front; the Medway, with Rochester, and its old castle and cathedral on one side. The whole stupendous property is on the old Dover Road.

It is pleasant to think that the ghost of Falstaff was such a near neighbour to the creator of so many Falstaffian-Dickensian characters. Falstaff might have given utterance to Pickwick's summing up of these Kent towns joined together as one Medway city: Strood and Frindsbury, linked by Rochester Bridge to the Cathedral city which in turn runs without break into Chatham, Brompton, Gillingham, and Rainham. According to Samuel Pickwick:

> The principal productions of these towns appear to be soldiers, sailors, Jews, chalk, shrimps, officers, and dockyard men. The commodities chiefly exposed for sale in the public streets are marine stores, hardbake, apples, flat-fish, and oysters.

Yes, one can hear Falstaff reeling off such items. He had a love for surprising words.

Gadshill was well placed for robbery, and so well patronized by footpads and highwaymen. It was on the west side of the hill, at four o'clock one morning, that the notorious Swift Neck Nick, riding his bay mare, committed a successful robbery, and rode to Gravesend. Here he took the ferry, and rode north for his life, reaching York the same afternoon. Here he changed his dress, and in order to make as public appearance as possible, went to the Bowling Green. Encountering the Lord Mayor, he had a long chat with him. When he was eventually charged with the robbery, he enlisted the evidence of the Lord Mayor upon his side, and the jury found it utterly impossible for anyone to have been on Gadshill in the morning, when in the afternoon the same person was known to have played bowls in the City of York. This exploit is commonly attributed to the more famous, or rather infamous, Dick Turpin. Turpin's true record can be read in *The Newgate Calendar*, in which his outstanding exploits seem to have been the killing (perhaps by accident, though it is doubtful)

of his colleague King, a highwayman who had some spark of honour among thieves. Also his brutal attack on the landlady of an inn on the Dover Road, whom he turned upon her own spit at the kitchen fire till she confessed where she had hidden her money hoards.

So Gadshill is honoured today, by reason of our two greatest English writers—Shakespeare and Dickens. In spite of glorious Falstaff, the latter must come first upon Gadshill. It is the very heart of Dickensia, and stands for him as Stratford-on-Avon does for Shakespeare. Both men worked and lived in London, but it is their places of retreat that are enshrined for them by pilgrims from all over the world. Shakespeare's birthplace and tomb fill us with awe, but the simplicity of that Empty Chair at Gadshill has caught the universal imagination far more than does his name in brass upon the floor of Poets' Corner in the Abbey. Shakespeare's wish as to his burial has always been respected by reason of the curse attached to his epitaph. There is no one who would dare to move his bones. But Dickens left no such curse: only a wish. Born fifteen years after his death in Rochester, I was privileged as a boy to know many of his friends, and actually two of his own characters, at least their prototypes, for the Dean's Verger in my young days was the Mr. Tope of *Edwin Drood*, and Hoadley, the Precincts verger of that time, always boasted that Dickens had made him a thorough scamp in Durdles. Dickens had known him well, and must have enjoyed his many chats with him, for he was a humorist after his own heart. It was Hoadley who told me of Dickens's wish about his grave. One autumn morning I was watching him sweeping up leaves in front of the west door of the Cathedral. He was telling me about the last time he had seen the great writer before his death. He would walk from Gadshill and saunter in the Precincts, nearly every day, while making notes for his *Edwin Drood*. Suddenly Hoadley sat down on his barrow and pointed across to the railings of the old churchyard under the castle wall. "Them Abbey people never ought to have got him," he declared sadly. "We ought to have had him over there. That's where he wanted to be put."

I can see the green grass now beyond those railings, and the ancient grey walls of the castle gardens. Under the shade of venerable trees, to the cooing of a pigeon choir perched on the ramparts above, was an ideal resting-place.

For the next scene laid in Kent we must go to the opening of the fourth act of the *Second Part* of *King Henry VI.*

KENT. THE SEASHORE NEAR DOVER.

Like Edinburgh, Dover is dominated by its castle. The nearest Fortress to the Continent needed to be strong, and the height on which it is built seems to have been created by a God who had the welfare of this country at heart. At the close of the sixteenth century a German lawyer, one Paul Hentzner, said of Dover: "Upon a hill, or rather rock, which on its right side is almost everywhere a precipice, a very extensive castle rises to a surprising height, in size like a little city, extremely well fortified and thickset with towers, and seems to threaten the sea beneath." It is a castle rich in legend and history. It is generally accepted that King Arthur held his court there, which would account for the naming of the towers Arthur and Guinevere. Hengist and Horsa held it for a time, and in John's days, when the Dauphin had captured all Kent save this castle, his father damped his victorious ardour by remarking that unless he had taken Dover Castle he had not gained a foot of land in England. Whereupon the Dauphin left London in order to besiege Dover. Finding the task hopeless, he went for reinforcements from France, but on his return was met by Hubert de Burgh, who was Constable, in the Straits. Here the French fleet was defeated, within sight of the garrison.

Shakespeare must have known the amusing story of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Dover. In order to make his speech the more impressive, the Mayor stood upon a stool. His loyal address only got as far as "Most gracious Queen, welcome——" when Her Majesty showed herself most ungracious by exclaiming irritably:

"Most gracious fool
Get off that stool!"

There are two authentic accounts of the grim event shown by Shakespeare in this scene of the murder of William de la Poole, Duke of Suffolk. The one from Hall is against the Duke and the other in a letter from William Lemner to John Paston, is full of grief for his dreadful fate. Whatever Suffolk's faults were, the manner of his death was unpardonable. With no chance to defend himself, he was done to death by a crew of bloody-minded scoundrels. That he was ambitious, and had used the mutual passion which existed between him and the Queen for his own advancement, was not sufficient to bar him from facing his peers in trial, and appealing to the King's judge-

ment. Holinshed's account is taken from Hall practically word for word. He writes:

> But God's justice would not that so ungracious a person should so escape; for when he shipped in Suffolk, intending to transport himself over into France, he was encountered with a ship of war appertaining to the Duke of Excester, constable of the Tower of London, called the Nicholas of the Tower. The captain of that bark with small fight entered into the duke's ship, and perceiving his person present, brought him to Dover road, and there on one side of a cockboat caused his head to be stricken off, and left his body with the head lying there on the sands; which corpse, being there found by a chaplain of his, was conveyed to Wingfield College, in Suffolk, and there buried. This end had William de la Poole, Duke of Suffolk, as men judge by God's providence, for that he had procured the death of that good Duke of Gloster, as before is partly touched.

The other account mentioned, preserved in the Paston Correspondence, is dated the 5th of May 1450, and penned immediately after the crime became known. It is interesting to compare it with the Hall-Holinshed version, but for easier reading we are not retaining the original spelling and lettering.

> Right worshipful sir,—I recommend me to you, and am right sorry of that I shall say, and have so washed this little bill with sorrowful tears, that scarcely ye shall read it. As on Monday next after May-day [4th May] there came tidings to London that on Thursday before [30th April] the Duke of Suffolk came unto the coasts of Kent full near Dover, with his two ships and a little spinner; the which spinner he sent with certain letters by certain of his trusted men unto Calais-ward to know how he should be received, and with him met a ship called Nicholas of the Tower, with other ships waiting on him, and by them that were in the spinner the master of the Nicholas had knowledge of the duke's coming. When he had espied the duke's ships he sent full his boat to weet what they were, and the duke himself spoke to them, and said he was, by the king's commandment, sent to Calais-ward, &c.; and they said he must speak with their master; and so he, with two or three of his men, went forth with them in their boat to the Nicholas; and when he came the master bade him welcome, traitor, as men say. And further, the master desired to weet if the shipmen would hold with the duke, and they sent word they would not in no wise; and so he was in the Nicholas till Saturday next following. Some say he wrote much things to be delivered to the king, but that is not verily known; some say he had his confessor with him, &c.; and some say he was arraigned in the ship in their manner, upon the

impeachments, and found guilty, &c. Also he asked the name of the ship, and when he knew it he remembered Stacy, that said, if he might escape the danger of the Tower he would be safe; and then his heart failed him, for he thought he was deceived. And in the sight of all his men he was drawn out of the great ship into the boat, and there was an axe and a stock; and one of the lewdest of the ship bade him lay down his head, and he should be fairly ferd with [dealt with], and die on a sword; and took a rusty sword and smote off his head within half a dozen strokes, and took away his gown of russet, and his doublet of velvet mailed, and laid his body on the sands of Dover, and some say his head was set on a pole by it, and his men set on the land, by great circumstance and prey. And the sheriff of Kent doth watch the body, and sent his under-sheriff to the judges to weet what to do; and also to the king, what shall be done. Further I wot not; but thus far is it, if the process be erroneous let his counsel reverse it, &c.

Shakespeare makes Suffolk go to his death bravely, heaping scorn upon his murderers.

For the next scene laid by Shakespeare at Dover we must turn to the third scene of the fourth act of *King Lear*. But Dover is mentioned in the first scene of the act when Edgar is asked by his blinded father, Gloster, if he knows the way to Dover. Whether the Heath on which they meet is Blackheath, we cannot say, but by Edgar's reply that he knows it "*Both stile and gate, horseway, and footpath*" the way sounds long. Not recognizing Edgar as his son, Gloster further inquires whether he knows Dover. Edgar feigning madness and calling himself Mad Tom, replies: "*Ay, master.*" It is then that Gloster gives him orders to lead him to a certain cliff, which we identify as Shakespeare's Cliff today. He says:

> There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
> Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
> Bring me but to the very brim of it,
> And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
> With something rich about me: from that place
> I shall no leading need.

Shakespeare has left the geography of his scenes vague, except when he comes to Dover, knowing that an army landing from France would come the shortest way by sea. We may say with some certainty that Lear's own Palace was what is now the town of Leicester, but the other palaces that title the scenes are vague.

KENT. THE FRENCH CAMP NEAR DOVER.

This scene omitted in the Folio, and according to Johnson for the purpose of shortening the play, serves the purpose of showing Cordelia's great love and pity for her father, and also to show that Lear is in Dover.

KENT. THE FRENCH CAMP NEAR DOVER. A TENT.

This little scene follows, in order to show Cordelia preparing to meet with her mad father. She has a doctor ready to help him.

KENT. THE COUNTRY NEAR DOVER.

This is the sixth scene of the act, and in it we get a magnificent description of the Shakespeare Cliff. It is a curious scene. Gloster, intent upon ending his life, is anxious to know when they reach the top of the cliff he mentioned. They are in reality no way near it, for Gloster says that he cannot hear the sea, and that the ground, which Edgar pretends is so steep, seems to him level. Edgar, wishing to cure his afflicted father from suicide, makes pretence that they are on the verge of the precipice. He describes how fearful he is of looking down so far, where the crows flying half-way down look smaller than beetles, while a samphire picker hanging to the rock looks no bigger than his head. Samphire is a species of cliff plant used in making pickles, and since it grows on the face of the precipice, Edgar calls the operation "*dreadful trade*". The fishermen walking the beach look like mice, and a tall anchoring ship no bigger than its cock-boat, which in turn was like a buoy you could scarcely see. Edgar then tells him that he is within a foot of the extreme edge, adding that he would not stand upright for all beneath the moon. Gloster gives him a jewel and tells him to go, which Edgar pretends to do. Gloster throws himself forward and falls. Then Edgar pretends to be one at the bottom of the precipice, and is amazed to find Gloster alive and unhurt after such a fall, and then begins to describe the height from the beach. Ten masts on end would not reach the top. Gloster who feels no hurt asks if he really has fallen, and Edgar replies:

> From the dread summit of this chalky bourn,
> Look up a-height,—the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
> Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.

Edgar then manages to persuade his father into thinking that the beggar, in reality himself, whom he pretended to see at the

top, was the fiend tempting him to the crime of suicide, which he vows never to attempt again. As a climax to this mad and curiously conceived scene comes the mad King Lear, fantastically dressed with wild flowers. Here is real madness, magnificently presented. Grave matters mixed with impertinency. Reason wrapped up in madness. These glorious passages of Lear cannot be quoted. They must be read outright. Lear is taken away to the care of Cordelia by one of her gentlemen. The villain, Oswald, enters and is about to kill Gloster when Edgar, still pretending to be a peasant, fights and kills him, and then discovers, from the letter he is carrying, Goneril's guilt. The next scene is still laid in Dover.

KENT. A TENT IN THE FRENCH CAMP.

According to the stage directions Lear is asleep on a bed, and soft music is playing. The doctor, gentleman, and others are in attendance when Cordelia and Kent enter. The awakening of Lear is one of the most beautiful passages in what Shelley calls "the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world". Those who saw Irving at the Lyceum in *Lear* give the same tribute to his acting in this scene. This finishes the fourth act, and the fifth of three scenes is laid near Dover.

KENT. THE BRITISH CAMP NEAR DOVER.

Visiting Dover today, it is easy to imagine the setting of these battle pictures in *King Lear*. The green grass, and the white chalk. The canvas and silks of the tents trembling in the strong sea breeze. Between the different hills, the sloping hollows are ideal camping spots, as the Romans found in their day.

This scene heightens the jealousy of the sisters for Edmund's love and Goneril's hatred. Edgar, still disguised, brings a letter to Albany, proclaiming Edmund a traitor, and promising after the battle to produce a champion to prove it in arms. The end of the scene gives Edmund one of those soliloquies of villainy so dear to Iago and Richard III. Having sworn his love to both the sisters, he asks himself: "*Which of them shall I take? Both? one? or neither?*" He then plans the death of Albany at the hands of Goneril, and no mercy for Cordelia and Lear.

KENT. A FIELD BETWEEN THE TWO CAMPS.

This short scene shows the Army of Lear and Cordelia

going to the battle, and then the news brought by Edgar of their defeat and capture. Then we pass on to the closing scene.

KENT. THE BRITISH CAMP NEAR DOVER.

Like Hamlet this last scene is strewn with corpses. Edmund is borne off to die, after being mortally wounded by Edgar, who declares himself. Lear carries in the dead Cordelia, and dies himself, while the dead bodies of Goneril, after taking her life, and of Regan, the sister she poisoned, are exposed to view on the stage.

The vast setting of the Dover Cliffs is a fitting end for this titanic tragedy. And the military setting is also fitting for Dover, which has always been a mighty place of defence. During the great Napoleonic scare, when Wordsworth addressed a clarion sonnet to the Men of Kent, Dover was foremost in his thoughts.

> Vanguard of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
> Ye children of a soil that doth advance
> Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
> Now is the time to prove your hardiment!
> No parleying now! In Britain is one breath;
> Ye men of Kent, 'Tis victory or death!

Before leaving this part of the coast in Kent while following in Shakespeare's steps, let us look for a moment at a grim spot that has helped to make this coast notorious throughout the centuries. There is no scene laid there in the plays, but Shakespeare uses it to bring disaster upon one of his characters, Antonio, the Merchant of Venice. Salarino brings news to Salanio from the Rialto:

> that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wracked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried.

The Dauphin's reinforcements are also lost there in the last act of *King John*. Defoe, writing a History of the Great Storm which swept over England a few years after the Great Fire of London, tells us of a thousand men who were lost on the Goodwins. At low tide these treacherous sands are hard, and the shipwrecked sailors from the vessels wrecked in the storm waved for help from the reef as the tide rose. The men of Deal, however, who were in the best position to rescue them,

were so occupied with gathering in the treasures thrown up by the waves that they callously left the mariners to drown, or be sucked in by the quicksands.

Miles Norcliffe, a sailor on H.M.S. *Shrewsbury* in the great storm of 1703, gives an account of how men and ships were driven upon the Goodwins. Defoe gives the number of Navy ships lost as thirteen with two thousand men. Norcliffe speaks also of forty merchant ships that followed the same fate. His letter was written while the disaster was going on around his ship. He actually saw the sinking of the *Mary*, the *Northumberland*, the *Sterling Castle*, and the *Restoration*. From the *Shrewsbury* he saw Admiral Beaumont and his men aboard the *Mary*, climbing the mainmast for safety, only to be drowned with the ship. Three hospital ships were split and sunk. This is the worst record of the Goodwins, though their toll of single vessels is tremendous. In the quicksands a wreck will disappear quickly. When I walked on the hard part of the sands some time ago, I could not help wondering whether Antonio's ship of rich lading was somewhere beneath my feet. The reef has its use, however, for it gives an anchorage shelter to the Downs of some eight miles' stretch. The name Goodwin comes from Earl Godwin, who owned the land over which the sea now rides. The tradition that Tenterden Steeple is the cause of the breach in the Goodwin Sands has two theories for argument. One that the stones set aside for the defence of the Earl's property were annexed by the Abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, for use in building his church property at Tenterden, and the other that money taxed for the purpose of sea defence was deposited in the hands of the Bishop of Rochester, who, thinking that the sea had remained quiet for many years, diverted some of the money towards the building of the steeple in question. Whereupon the sea took its revenge by breaking in upon the Goodwins.

It was the great sea fight against the Dutch off the Goodwins which made De Witt say "that English sailors might be killed, and English ships burned, but that there were no conquering Englishmen".

For the next Kent scene shown to us by Shakespeare we go to the tenth scene of the fourth act in the *Second Part* of *Henry VI.*

KENT. IDEN'S GARDEN.

There is much dispute as to whether Jack Cade was killed in Kent or in Sussex. Holinshed copies Hall, his elder chronicler,

in the matter of Cade, giving his account literally but with some additions of his own. They state certainly that Cade fled to Sussex, and there is a Cade Street in Sussex today which claims the distinction of being the death scene of the rebellious leader. There is no reason, however, to disbelieve Shakespeare in placing the scene in Kent, for Cade was obviously hounded from place to place, avoiding those who wished to earn the thousand marks offered for his capture.

Alexander Iden was a landed Esquire of Ripley Court, Westwell, which is near Ashford. Ashford being Cade's home, what more likely than that the hunted man should make for that vicinity where no doubt he hoped to find some friend to shelter him? Also the fact that Iden was in a garden and fighting to the death with Cade indicates that it was his garden which he was defending against the trespassing of an intruder, armed and threatening.

If we look up the Idens in Hasted's *History of Kent* we read, however, that they did own property in Sussex belonging to Ripley Court, in Kent, so that there is something to be said on both sides of the controversy. Hasted tells us that the Idens were a family of great antiquity and good estate about Iden, in the county of Sussex, and Rolvenden, in the county of Kent. The property continued in their hands down to Alexander Iden, who was in residence during the twenty-eighth year of Henry VI, during which year he was appointed sheriff of Kent after William Crowmer, his predecessor in office, had been murdered by Jack Cade and his rebels. He also tells us that Jack Cade, when deserted by his followers, concealed himself in the woods near Hothfield, belonging to Ripley Manor, in Westwell, soon after which he was discovered by Alexander Iden in a field belonging to that manor in Westwell parish, or, as some say, in a field belonging to Hothfield parish, still named Jack Cade's Field. Holinshed says of Cade's hiding and discovery:

> But Jack Cade, desperate of succours, which by the friends of the Duke of York were to him promised, and seeing his company thus without his knowledge suddenly depart, mistrusting the sequel of the matter, departed secretly, in habit disguised, into Sussex; but all his metamorphosis and transfiguration little prevailed, for after a proclamation made that whosoever could apprehend the said Jack Cade should have for his pain a M marks, many sought for him, but few espied him, till one Alexander Iden, esquire of Kent, found him in a garden, and there, in his defence, manfully

slew the caitiff Cade, and brought his dead body to London, whose head was set on London Bridge.

After this Iden was appointed Governor of Rochester Castle. He was married to the widow of his predecessor, the daughter of Lord Say who was so brutally done to death by Cade in London. In appealing to the men of Kent for mercy, Shakespeare gives him the following tribute to pay to this county and her inhabitants:

> Kent, in the Commentaries Caesar writ,
> Is term'd the civil'st place of all this isle:
> Sweet is the country, beauteous, full of riches;
> The people liberal, valiant, active, wealthy;
> Which makes me hope you are not void of pity.

This is Cæsar's tribute, of course, and the last line only is Say's, who had said of Kent just previously that it was *bona terra, mala gens.* A good land, a bad people. He certainly found them so, for Cade roared back at him: "Away with him, he speaks Latin."

The next scene following this and opening the last act of this play is:

KENT. FIELDS BETWEEN DARTFORD AND BLACKHEATH.

Although the stage directions at the head of this scene are very warlike with "*The King's Camp on one side. On the other, enter York attended with drum and colours: his Forces at some distance.*" Actually no battle is fought on these fields between Dartford and Blackheath, except battles in words leading on to the next scene of the battle of St. Albans. York comes from Ireland with the purpose of removing his enemy, the Duke of Somerset, from the King. Buckingham tells York that Somerset is in the Tower, and when asked upon his honour whether he is a prisoner, Buckingham swears that this is so. On the King's entrance York explains that he came with arms only to heave Somerset hence and to fight with the monstrous rebel Cade, and at that moment Iden appears with the traitor's head, for which service he is knighted and taken into the King's attendance. Then the King sees Margaret entering with Somerset, and fearful of York's displeasure at their deception, urges Buckingham aside to bid the Queen hide him; since York has only dismissed his forces on the promise that Somerset was a prisoner, Margaret

and Somerset outface York, who is joined with his two sons, Edward and Richard, and then with the forces of Warwick and Salisbury. The Cliffords, on the side of Henry and Somerset, defy them, and the scene closes with challenges to the field of battle. Henry, who had pursued York to Kent, knowing that he was there to raise the Men of Kent against him, retires north to gather strength, followed by York's army. Shakespeare has ignored the intervals of time, in order to gain a quick sequence of events for his dramatic purpose.

And here we take leave of Shakespeare's scenes that are laid in Kent.

Chapter Five

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN HERTFORDSHIRE

SHAKESPEARE uses three localities in Hertfordshire for scenes. Barnet he uses twice, St. Albans three times, and Langley once.

BARNET is only ten and a half miles from London. It consists of three districts. FRIERN BARNET, so called from its manor having belonged to the Friary of St. John of Jerusalem, is the most southerly. Then comes EAST BARNET, and lastly, the most northerly, HIGH BARNET, or CHIPPING. It is the last of these that was the scene of the great battle of Barnet. It was fought on the 14th of April 1471. This was an Easter Sunday. On the very same day Queen Margaret, who had been waiting since November for favourable winds to bring her to England from Normandy, landed at Weymouth, after battling heavy storms. The news of her landing reached King Edward upon Easter Tuesday. The two battle scenes of Barnet used by Shakespeare are to be found in the fifth act of the *Third Part* of *King Henry VI*, scenes two and three.

HERTFORDSHIRE. A FIELD OF BATTLE NEAR BARNET.

After the opening of the usual *alarums and excursions*, the action starts dramatically with King Edward bringing in the wounded Warwick. He flings him down to die, owning that all had feared him, and then goes back to the battle to seek out Warwick's brother Montague, to kill him too. The dying king-maker meanwhile prays that his brother may come to him so that his tears could wash his congealed blood. But Oxford and Somerset tell him the sad news of his brother's death and how to the very last he cried out for his valiant brother.

The chronicler Hall describes this hard-fought battle, that ended with the death of Warwick. He writes:

> When the day began to spring the trumpets blew courageously and the battle fiercely began. Archers first shot, and billmen them followed. King Edward, having the greater number of men, valiantly set on his enemies. The earl on the other side, remembering his ancient fame and renown, manfully withstood him. This

> battle on both sides was sore fought and many slain, in whose rooms succeeded ever fresh and fresh men. In the mean season, while all men were together by the ears, ever looking to which way fortune would incline, the Earl of Warwick, after long fight, wisely did perceive his men to be overpressed with the multitude of his adversaries; wherefore he caused new men to relieve them that fought in the forward, by reason of which succours King Edward's part gave a little back (which was the cause that some lookers-on, and no fighters, galloped to London, saying that the earl had won the field), which thing when Edward did perceive, he with all diligence sent fresh men to their succours. If the battle were fierce and deadly before, now it was crueller, more bloody, more fervent and fiery, and yet they had fought from morning almost to noon without any part getting advantage of other. King Edward, being weary of so long a conflict and willing to see an end, caused a great crew of fresh men (which he had for this only policy kept all day in store) to set on their enemies, in manner being weary and fatigate: but although the earl saw these new succours of fresh and new men to enter the battle, being nothing afraid, but hoping of the victory (knowing perfectly that there was all King Edward's power) comforted his men, being weary, sharply quickening and earnestly desiring them with hardy stomachs to bear out this last and final brunt of the battle, and that the field was even at an end. But when his soldiers, being sore wounded, wearied with so long a conflict, did give little regard to his words, he, being a man of a mind invincible, rushed into the midst of his enemies, where as he (adventured so far from his own company to kill and slay his adversaries that he could not be rescued) was in the middle of his enemies stricken down and slain. The Marquis Montacute, thinking to succour his brother, which he saw was in great jeopardy, and yet in hope to obtain the victory, was likewise overthrown and slain. After the earl was dead his party fled, and many were taken, but not one man of name nor of nobility.

Thus died the great Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the king-maker, and last of the barons. He was greater than any in England, and more powerful than either of the kings he put upon the throne. He came first into prominence at the battle of St. Albans, and his success on this field won for him the captaincy of Calais.

He captured Henry VI and put Edward on the throne, only to turn his coat again when Edward married behind his back. He then restored Henry to the throne, and fought against Edward.

After his death, history tells us that his body was exposed with great indignity upon the pavement of St. Paul's for three whole days before being given burial.

VICTIMS OF THE WASH

ANN HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE, SHOTTERY, NEAR STRATFORD-ON-AVON

BARNET. ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

This scene follows the death of Warwick with Edward in triumph, having the best of his enemies at Barnet, and now marching to meet the army of Queen Margaret, who, he hears, are holding their course towards Tewkesbury.

Chipping Barnet, nicknamed High Barnet because it is perched on the lip of a considerable hill, is the old market town of the district. The parish church crowns the top of the town. It has been much enlarged, and is an imposing building. I visited it on a Sunday morning just after the morning service, when everyone had gone but the verger and two choristers who were rearranging the music in the choir. It was Lent, and the boys were wearing purple cassocks and Elizabethan frilled collars, which helped to fit in with my thoughts of those ancient days. I remarked to the verger what a magnificent church it was, and he pointed to the north side, which was the ancient church, and said how much more beautiful the ancient pillars were compared to the newer ones. Wanting to know where I could find the place where Warwick fell, he gave me my direction, telling me that there was an obelisk erected to the Last of the Barons on the spot where he was killed. I walked down a hill road flanked on both sides with modern estate houses, and felt that here was nothing left of the olden atmosphere. As I counted the turnings between these new buildings, however, I was struck by the names of these new streets. They were famous names of those far-off times. King Edward Road; Clifford Road; and Woodville Road. I then met a later name: Latimer. Here history was preserved amongst new town planning, and all respect to those responsible. By this time I had forgotten my direction, given me by the helpful verger, so I asked two gentlemen if they knew the way to the memorial of the battle. They both knew where the Great War Memorial was, and a very old church near to it, and one of them said: "If, as you say, there is some old monument, the most likely place to find it would be up by the woods there. Go through the park gates and cross the common till you come to an old church with a tower. Look out for an old beacon on the tower, and that's the church I mean."

I found the gates, and came upon as picturesque a spot as you could find so near London. The common was more like the old-fashioned village green, even to the pond. Trees of a fine wood on one side, and a church and hamlet clustered on the edge of the common. Sure enough there was the ancient beacon, post and bucket brazier complete. One imagined all

the occasions it would have burned for the spreading of news. The name of this quaint spot is MONKEN HADLEY, and the old church is dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin. There was a public-house near by called YE OLD MONKEN HOLT. There is an old oak-tree, that has been railed off for preservation, in which or on which or behind which Warwick was supposed to have hidden. Somehow I can't imagine that he would ever have hidden from anybody. I asked a rather solemn lady if she could tell me where the memorial of the battle was. She looked hard at me and said; "Along that way on the main road. Ask anyone. But don't ask for the memorial, but for THE TWO BREWERS. That's a public-house. Everyone will know where *that* is. Once there, look straight ahead of you and you will see the memorial in the middle of the road."

THE TWO BREWERS was shut, but the memorial was very much in the open, with two roads forking past it.

It is a rectangular pillar, set upon a broad square base, and stands on a grass patch. On one side it tells you that "*This was Erected* 1740". Two of the sides are utilized as a milestone.

It says on one: "*From St. Albans VIII Miles*"; on the other: "*To Hatfield VII Miles*". The fourth side holds the inscription to the battle.

Here was
fought the
Famous Battle
Between Edward
the 4th and the
Earl of Warwick
Anno
1471
in which the Earl
was Defeated
And Slain.

An interesting account of the battle of Barnet occurs in a history of the time entitled, *A Historie of the Arrivall of King Edward IV*. The author was one of the King's servants and was an eye-witness of the fight. Edward had led his army out of London on Easter eve. Warwick, having followed him, had called a halt at Barnet, for he had hoped to take Edward by surprise during the Easter festivities. Edward, however, proved himself a general of quick action. He encountered the Lancastrian outposts in the town of Barnet and drove them back.

Warwick's main camp was some half a mile from the town. Ordering strict silence, Edward led his force through the narrow street and past the church, and then out on to the plain. According to the eye-witness quoted, it was a dark night and the King could not locate his enemy, and was actually much nearer than he supposed when he halted. "*But he took not his ground,*" writes the chronicler, "*so even in front afore them as he would have done if he might better have seen them; but somewhat a-syden-hand*" [on one side].

Warwick had placed ordnance to his front, and his gunners fired all through the night. But they were also ignorant that the enemy was so near, and the shots passed over the King's force, who were not only nearer but on lower ground. The darkness of the night gave way to a thick mist in the morning, so that the enemy could see each other no better than they had been able to at night. The King ordered the advance between four and five o'clock, and for three hours the men of the two roses fought each other in the mist. Had that Easter morning been clear, the results of the battle might have been very different. Warwick had more men, and a better position, but owing to the bad visibility, was unable to use a plan of combined command, and he was ignorant that his forces had routed the left wing of the Yorkists. The light was so obscure that the Yorkists were at one time attacking their own side. It was a fight of confusion, neither leader knowing what was happening in other parts of the field.

But the battle of Barnet, perhaps owing to the mist, was a turning point in English history, since the evils as well as the grandeurs of the old feudal system were killed with the Last of the Barons. Warwick owned property in twenty-one counties. His revenue came from one hundred and ten manors, the city of Worcester, and four Channel Islands. He had also extensive property in Wales. Phillipe de Comines tells us in his *Memoires* that Warwick was so popular in Calais that everyone wore his badge (so often referred to in the plays) of the Bear and the Ragged Staff. He says, "*no man esteeming himself gallant whose head was not adorned with his ragged staff*". Stow in his *Annales*, referring to Warwick, says "*at his house in London six oxen were usually eaten at a breakfast*". His hospitality was immense, which enabled him to carry the people with him at his need. More powerful than the kings he set up, he was too powerful for a subject. The sovereigns that followed his death saw to it that his like did not grow so strong again.

From Barnet to St. Albans is a direct road of some eight miles, and St. Albans is the next locality in the steps of Shakespeare in Hertfordshire. It opens the *Second Part* of *Henry VI.*

SAINT ALBANS.

This scene starts with the royal hawking party. Outside the town, they would be flying their falcons in the vicinity of the little Ver river, for in the opening line the Queen speaks of "flying at the brook", which indicates that they were hawking for wildfowl. Like all Elizabethans, Shakespeare would be well acquainted with this popular sport, and accordingly well versed in its terms. He would know that the "*pitch*" of a falcon was the height it soared before dropping down upon the prey. Under the talk of hawking, Gloster and the Cardinal, the latter supported by the Queen and Suffolk, quarrel, and as the King tries to make peace, Shakespeare inserts one of the queerest incidents in those times, known as the Miracle at St. Albans. Sir Thomas More, who had the story from his father, writes of it, and Shakespeare may have found it in his book, which was published in 1557. The episode has been told by the chronicler Grafton, who gives More as his source of information:

> Written and set forth by Sir Thomas More, knight, in a book of his, entitled a Dialogue concerning heresies and matters of religion. "In the time of Henry the sixth, as he rode in progress, there came to the town of Saint Albans a certain beggar, with his wife, and there was walking about the town, begging, five or six days before the king's coming, saying, that he was born blind, and never saw in all his life; and was warned in his dream that he should come out of Berwick, where he said that he had ever dwelled, to seek Saint Alban. When the king was come, and the town full of people, suddenly this blind man, at Saint Alban's shrine, had his sight; and the same was solemnly rung for a miracle, and the Te Deum songen: so that nothing was talked of in all the town but this miracle. So happened it then that Duke Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, a man no less wise than also well learned, called the poor man up to him, and looked well upon his eyen, and asked whether he could never see anything at all in all his life before? and when as well his wife as himself affirmed fastly, No; then he looked advisedly upon his eyen again, and said, I believe you very well, for me thinketh that ye cannot see well yet. Yes, sir, quoth he: I thank God and his holy martyr, I can see now as well as any man. Ye can, quoth the duke; what colour is my gown? Then

anon the beggar told him. What colour, quoth he, is this man's gown? He told him also, without staying or stumbling, and told the names of all the colours that could be showed him. And when the Duke saw that, he made him to be set openly in the stocks: for though he could have seen suddenly by miracle the difference between divers colours, yet could he not by sight, so suddenly tell the names of all these colours, except he had known them before no more than he could name all the men whom he should suddenly see."

Shakespeare carries the ludicrous side of this judgement of Solomon further, for he makes his blind fraud also feign to be a cripple who had never been able to stand. Gloster sends for the beadle with a whip, and tells him to whip him till he leaps over a stool. A pathetic tale when the wife says they committed the fraud for pure need, and a harsh punishment when the Protector orders them to be whipped through every market-town till they reach their home of Berwick.

The close of this scene is taken up with Buckingham's report against the Protector's wife, in that she had dabbled in the black arts with witches and conjurers, in order to take the life of the King and certain of his Privy Counsellors. On hearing this, Henry decides to sleep that night in St. Albans and to proceed to London the next day.

The next use of St. Albans made by Shakespeare is in the last act of this play, in which the first battle of St. Albans occupies the two closing scenes.

SAINT ALBANS.

This is used in contrast to the third and last scene of the act, which is titled, FIELDS NEAR ST. ALBANS, in order to show that the battle first raged within the town and was carried out into the fields beyond the walls. After *alarums and excursions* Warwick enters, calling for his enemy, Clifford of Cumberland, to fight with him to the finish. As he tells York, Clifford had unhorsed him by killing his horse, though he had managed to retaliate by killing in his turn the steed of which Clifford was so fond. This is a convenient piece of stage-managing on Shakespeare's part, enabling him to dispense with the nobles' horses on the stage for their last fight together. Shakespeare went to Hall for his information, who describes the battle in detail:

The king, being credibly informed of the great army coming toward him, assembled an host, intending to meet with the duke

in the north part, because he had too many friends about the city of London; and for that cause, with great speed and small luck, he, being accompanied with the Dukes of Somerset and Buckingham, the Earls of Stafford, Northumberland and Wiltshire, with the Lord Clifford and divers other barons, departed out of Westminster, the xx day of May, toward the town of St. Albans: of whose doings the Duke of York being advertised by his espials, with all his power coasted the country, and came to the same town the third day ensuing. The king, hearing of their approaching, sent to him messengers, straitly charging and commanding him, as an obedient subject, to keep the peace, and not, as an enemy to his natural country, to murder and slay his own countrymen and proper nation. While King Henry, more desirous of peace than of war, was sending forth his orators at the one end of the town, the Earl of Warwick, with the Marchmen, entered at the other gate of the town, and fiercely set on the king's foreward, and them shortly discomforted. Then came the Duke of Somerset and all the other lords with the king's power, which fought a sore and cruel battle, in which many a tall man lost his life: but the Duke of York sent ever fresh men to succour the weary, and put new men in the places of the hurt persons, by which policy the king's army was profligate and dispersed, and all the chieftains of the field almost slain and brought to confusion. For there died, under the sign of the Castle, Edmund Duke of Somerset, who long before was warned to eschew all castles; and beside him lay Henry the second Earl of Northumberland, Humphrey Earl of Stafford, son to the Duke of Buckingham, John Lord Clifford, and viii M men and more. Humphrey Duke of Buckingham, being wounded, and James Butler Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, seeing fortune's lowering chance, left the king post alone, and with a great number fled away. This was the end of the first battle of St. Albans, which was fought on the Thursday before the feast of Pentecost, being the xxiii day of May. In this xxxiii year of the king's reign, the bodies of the noble men were buried in the monastery, and the mean people in other places.

It has been suggested that Hall made an error in the number of the killed, and that he meant eight hundred instead of thousand. In the Paston letters it is stated that there were slain "*some six score*". It will be remembered that in the witch incantation scene of the first act, the Spirit raised by Margaret Jourdain said of the Duke of Somerset:

Let him shun castles;
Safer shall he be upon the sandy plains
Than where castles mounted stand.

Today they will show you the spot in the town of St. Albans where Somerset was killed The castle in question was an ale-house with the sign of a castle, and he was killed by Richard Plantagenet beneath it: that is, he is killed by Richard in the play, but in history Richard was not yet three years old at the time of the battle. It would have been a case of Goliath and a Baby. As one walks the streets of old-world St. Albans, one can picture the dense mass of fighting men, struggling in the narrow streets and in the broad market-place. I think one of the most impressive sights in England is the nave of the Cathedral. Gothic in architecture, it is the longest of any English nave. Other notable features are the shrine of St. Alban and the Norman tower. It was the old Abbey Church founded in 793 in honour of St. Alban, but it became the cathedral of a new diocese in 1875. Perhaps the most interesting thing from the Elizabethan stand-point is the tomb of Francis Bacon in the Church of St. Michael. I believe that the most important industries today are printing and brewing. Two mellow trades, well suited to this old city. I wonder if Shakespeare ever took his ease at the CASTLE INN? He refers to its "*paltry sign*" and calls it an *ale-house*. The site is now occupied by a bank which bears the inscription:

On this site stood The Castle Inn
before which Edmund Beaufort
2nd Duke of Somerset
was slain during
the 1st Battle of St. Albans
22 May 1455.

Those responsible for this notice have not taken Shakespeare's liberty of making Richard Plantagenet his killer.

Certainly Shakespeare never saw what we see now at Verulam-ium, the Roman Theatre, which has now been so beautifully excavated and cared for that we can almost see the Roman actors on the stage, and the thronged circle of Roman and British holiday-makers. The grass banks against the grey stone give a great sense of peace where once was noise. The last time I was there was on a Sunday afternoon when out of a clear February sky a sudden and violent thunderstorm arose. It was the same storm whose lightning set fire to the barrage balloons over Stanmore. I had passed them on the way from Edgware to St. Albans. I took shelter in the hut of the custodian, whose deputy asked me to come in from the drenching storm.

This gentleman, who had served his time in the police, was a great student of Roman times, and knew all there was to know about the theatre at Verulamium. From the window of the shed we could look down on to the steep banks and the graceful lonely pillar left on the stage. I soon found that my friend was a Baconian. He was quite convinced that Shakespeare did not write the plays but that Bacon did. He pointed up the drive-road, and talked of the "big house" and its wonderful library. He reckoned that if he could only get his lordship's permission to have a skim through some of the books under glass and lock he would no doubt find something or other to prove that Bacon wrote the plays and old Shakespeare had nothing to do with them. I told him that at least it was natural to meet a Baconian in St. Albans, but that personally I was for Shakespeare as far as the plays went, and that Bacon had quite enough of his own to get on with. I could see that my attitude took him by surprise. He was all for his local world-famed celebrity, just as he was all for the family ruling at the "big house". Here was the feudal system at its very best. A noble lord who made all his retainers happy, and a retainer who had nothing but praise for the noble lord. One realized that some people really deserved to inherit great properties. In the same way of thinking he was no doubt right to be all for the Lord Verulam buried in St. Michael's.

I did try to compromise by saying that it didn't really make much difference who wrote the plays, so long as we had them; but this he didn't agree with at all. It was Bacon or nothing with him. He was never argumentative; never aggressive. He was just innocently surprised that anyone should really think that Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare. I still cling to my old belief, but if I had to be convinced to the contrary, I should like the proof to come from that charming Baconian that I met in the hut of the Roman Theatre. Perhaps one day he will skim through those books at the "big house" and discover something.

The spot where Somerset fell is not so impressive as the death-place of St. Alban, who was martyred on Holmhurst Hill, which is the site of the cathedral. It was in this monastery church, as it was then, that the noble bodies were buried after the battle.

Whenever I think of St. Albans in future, I shall think of two American ladies I met during my last visit there. They had nothing to do with each other. One I met inside the Cathedral, the other outside. The one inside was standing in

the Saint's chapel, looking at the shrine. She told me that of all the wonderful things she had seen in Europe, the shrine appealed to her the most, because it was the shrine of the first English-speaking martyr, adding that here was a saint who could speak our own language. I couldn't help wondering whether St. Alban would recognize any word that either of us could say, but I kept the thought to myself, because I liked the sentiment of the American lady. The other American was a travelling student who asked me whether St. Alban was a legend or a real person. It's always nice to be asked a question that you know, and I was able to tell the young lady that St. Alban was a British soldier serving under the Romans who gave shelter to a Christian preacher named Amphibalus, and was converted by him. For this his masters put Alban to death by the sword upon the hill, in order that his body should not contaminate their homes in Verulamium. Some four centuries later Offa, King of Mercia, built a monastery upon the spot and in his honour, hoping thereby to atone for his own sins. When Paul de Caen, a relative of the famous Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, was made Abbot by the Conqueror, he rebuilt the church from material taken from the Roman remains of Verulamium. The magnificent Norman tower is entirely faced with Roman brick. They tell one that originally it was plastered, but that after the Dissolution the plaster was allowed to crumble till nothing was left of it. But what could look finer than the mellowness of those reddish bricks? When I had told the second American something of all this I went on to tell her that I had met a countrywoman of hers at the shrine, and thinking she would be interested in the sentiments of a fellow citizen, I told her what she had said about St. Alban. It made her laugh, and then she asked if I knew what part of America the other was from.

"From Boston," I told her, "for I happened to ask her that very question." The young student, who came from Virginia, said she was quite certain St. Alban would not understand a word anyone from New England said, but that he might appreciate the good old English from the South. I told her that since it was very difficult for a Londoner to understand a native of Cornwall, there would be very little in common speech between St. Alban and any of us.

She said she guessed so too, and then after thanking me for what she called my hospitality, informed me that St. Albans Cathedral was built on higher ground than any other; that the ground where we stood was three hundred and forty feet above sea-level, and that the height of the tower I had talked a lot about

was one hundred and forty-four feet. I checked this up later from a guide-book, and found that she was quite right. I love Americans, but sometimes some of them are as funny to us as all of us are always to all of them.

Leaving Barnet and St. Albans, we now visit the charming village of Langley, and the play to which we go to find Shakespeare's setting is *Richard II.* It is the fourth scene of Act III. As the crow flies, King's Langley is five miles from St. Albans.

LANGLEY. THE DUKE OF YORK'S GARDEN.

Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, took the title Langley because he was born there. He was generally supposed to have been a man of easy disposition, gentle and generous. Far more suited to be a country gentleman who could follow the chase and laze afterwards than a great man of affairs in the realm, which the accident of being born fifth son of Edward III called him to be. Shakespeare has made him a man one is instinctively sorry for, in that he is so distressed at the misfortunes of others. His weakness shows when he is made fussy by events, which are too big for him to handle, and yet which he tries to tackle conscientiously. Sorrow for anyone in trouble would have made him throw open the hospitality of his palace at King's Langley as a quiet retreat for the sufferer. In this case the sufferer is Richard's Queen, Isabel of Valois. Critics have said of Edmund of Langley that his caution in taking the lead in enterprises was a shiftiness in his nature which we should now label Safety First. Well, in those days it was a very courageous nobleman who did not hesitate a little in order to see which way the cat was going to jump. Perhaps this Duke of York hesitated too much in order to see which cause would advantage him the best, but when Henry IV was crowned he certainly retired to Langley, and lived a secluded life till he died three years later. Perhaps there was the motive of wishing to keep in with Richard in case he kept his crown, which influenced the Duke of York to entertain the unhappy queen. But I am sure there was a great deal of genuine kindness too.

Shakespeare is fond of bringing great ones into conversation with the humble. The contrast is dramatic, and gives the great one in question a chance to hear some home truths. There are many instances of this in his plays. The common soldier Williams speaks his mind of the King to the King, whom he thought to be a common man and not Henry V. But in this case the Queen is eavesdropping, and when she declares herself the gardener knows

who she is. When this play was produced "with considerable alterations and additions from the writings of Shakespeare" at Drury Lane in 1815, with the great Edmund Kean as the King, there was introduced a character called Blanch, played by Miss Poole, who sang a song. Evidently the lady-in-waiting to whom the Queen says that she would rather see her weep than hear her sing was in this case determined to perform. It must have been a very distorted version of Shakespeare's play when we are told that Mrs. Bartley, as the Queen, reclining on a sofa, listens to Miss Poole as Blanch singing, and then spouts some lines from *Titus Andronicus*. This sort of thing evidently killed the play for Kean, since it was only acted for thirteen performances. It is strange that in the whole of this play there is no comic relief. Even the gardener is solemn, though it would have been the part assigned to the comedian. Anyone who saw Tree's production of the play will remember this part beautifully played by that great clown, Lionel Brough. He played it sadly, of course, but how one longed to hear him laugh. There is one part in this play that can bring laughter. It is the part of the Duke of York. Especially if the play is given without cuts, this part stands out in comical inconsistency. His very backwards and forwards policy is amusing to watch and his testy fussiness is verging upon buffoonery. People who have produced the play seem to find it necessary to modify the character of Edmund of Langley, because they think his inconsistencies would not ring true. To me he has always seemed to be made out of the same ingredients as Polonius. They can both be laughed at so long as they keep their solemnities. And now what of this place called Langley where this man lived? Its main street on the highroad is old-fashioned, and the old church is well worth a visit. The chantry chapel of Edmund, Duke of York, is its most striking feature. The tomb bears some interesting heraldic shields. It was here that Richard II was laid to rest before his body was removed by Henry of Monmouth to Westminster Abbey. Queen Victoria was very interested in the church and gave considerable help towards its restoration. I recommend King's Langley to anyone on a fine day, as a peaceful spot, and there is an old-world house in which you can sit in just the right atmosphere and enjoy a well-served tea, with hot cakes that are a specialty of the house.

After our visit to King's Langley, we finish with the Shakespeare scenes that are set in Hertfordshire.

Chapter Six

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN WINDSOR

BERKSHIRE can boast of only one town used by Shakespeare as a setting for his scenes. Buckinghamshire can boast of only one village in the same category. The town is Windsor. The village is Datchet. Since the latter is only associated in the play of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with Shakespeare, we shall include it in this chapter of the royal borough.

We first go to the play of *Richard II* for Windsor settings. Act II, Scene 2. A ROOM IN THE PALACE, is generally accepted as taking place in London, which we have already done. Some editors, however, prefer to place it in WINDSOR CASTLE, because Holinshed mentions in his chronicle that Richard left his queen there when he sailed for Ireland. He says: "*leaving the queen with her train still at Windsor*".

In *Lingard's History* the parting is also given at Windsor.

> Having appointed his uncle, the Duke of York, regent during his absence, the king assisted at a solemn mass at Windsor, chanted a collect himself, and made his offering. At the door of the church he took wine and spices with his young queen; and lifting her up in his arms, repeatedly kissed her, saying, "Adieu, madam, adieu, till we meet again."

It is in this scene that the bewildered Duke of York tells the Queen that he will dispose of her, which obviously means that he will see her safe to his home at Langley. In the same breath he says that he should go to Plashy where the Duchess of Gloster had just died. He could get there a thousand pounds for raising troops, but since he had to hasten to Gloucestershire in order to face Hereford, who was in revolt, he says he has not the time. This points to the fact that Shakespeare imagined his scene, as most editors agree, in London. Langley would be on the road more or less to Berkeley and he could leave the Queen there under protection. Plashy would have been right out of his way.

WINDSOR is next seen in this play in Act V, Scene 3.

WINDSOR. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

The scene opens with Bolingbroke asking Percy for news of the Prince of Wales. The King had not seen him for three months,

and could get no news of him. Percy informs the King that he had spoken with him two days since, and repeats the Prince's ribald opinion of the Oxford triumphs about to be held. Bolingbroke holds out hope that the Prince will reform with years, when Aumerle enters to plead for pardon on account of being implicated in the plot against Henry's life. Aumerle, who was Edward Plantagenet, eldest son of the Duke of York, went through life making trouble for others and for himself. He took a strong hand against the Duke of Glocester, and was suspected of being connected with his murder. It was he who persuaded Richard to wait in Ireland instead of crossing to England immediately he heard of Bolingbroke's landing at Ravenspur. This was Richard's undoing, since the army collected in his defence at Conway were dispersed, after waiting in vain for the King to come and lead them. And now in this scene he is pleading for his life from Bolingbroke. The best that can be said of him is that he died most bravely, leading the vaward, or vanguard, at Agincourt. In the play of *Henry V*, Exeter tells Henry of his death beside the Earl of Suffolk, and his speech is the most moving in that play of grand speeches. So this Aumerle came to a better end in life than this scene promises, in the same way as the Prince of Wales slew the Hotspur who in this same scene carries tales about him to his father. The Duchess of York, who makes such a motherly appeal for the transgressing son of York, was in reality his stepmother. Shakespeare, however, sees the dramatic value of the mother's love, so alters the relationship to serve his turn. This is perhaps the one scene in which Bolingbroke somehow gets our sympathy. The one thing difficult to understand is the attitude of the Duke of York. He certainly tries to get his son condemned, or is it that he is gauging the King's character and thinks that if he, the father, is so loyal as to wish to sacrifice his son as a traitor, the King will see the value of keeping the father and winning the son? Polonius. to whom I have compared Edmund of Langley, had his clever tricks. He could offer advice to both King and Queen and his advice was taken. Therefore, though Polonius may have been the biggest bore of the court of Elsinore, he was by no means the biggest fool. In fact he was a wise counsellor. I still think that, after Richard, York could be the best acting part in the play. There is so much in his character of the "Oh-dear,-here's-a-terrible-state-of-affairs-and-I-suppose-I-must-do-my-best-to-straighten-things-out", that one can hardly imagine that his change of loyalty from Richard to Henry would make him detest his own son, whatever the young man's failings might be. Aumerle was a

grandson of the mighty Edward III, and proved at Agincourt the stuff he was made of, and the father would have realized, like Bolingbroke did of Hal, "*some sparkles of a better hope*". Therefore might not his attitude in this incredible scene be a clever dodge of a wily diplomat who was dealing with young relations?

Aumerle may have been misguided into thinking that the plot to kill Bolingbroke was an honourable cause if it ensured the rightful King his throne. *The Metrical History*, however, regards him as treacherous in all his undertakings, especially against Richard, not only in seeing that he lingered in Ireland when every hour was fatal, but that in joining the conspiracy headed by the Abbot of Westminster to murder Bolingbroke he was only acting the spy in order that he might betray the plot with full details to Bolingbroke. Shakespeare has gone to Holinshed for his version:

> The Earl of Rutland [which was Edward Plantagenet's title before being created Duke of Aumerle] departing before from Westminster, to see his father the Duke of York, as he sat at dinner had his counterpart of the indenture of the confederacy in his bosom. The father, espying it, would needs see what it was: and though the son humbly denied to show it, the father, being more earnest to see it, by force took it out of his bosom, and, perceiving the contents thereof, in a great rage caused his horses to be saddled out of hand, and spitefully reproving his son of treason, for whom he was become surety and mainpernour for his good bearing in open parliament, he incontinently mounted on horseback to ride towards Windsor to the king, to declare to him the malicious intent of his son and his accomplices. The Earl of Rutland, seeing in what danger he stood, took his horse and rode another way to Windsor, in post, so that he got thither before his father, and when he was alighted at the castle-gate, he caused the gates to be shut, saying, that he must needs deliver the keys to the king. When he came before the king's presence, he kneeled down on his knees, beseeching him of mercy and forgiveness, and declaring the whole matter unto him in order as everything had passed; obtained pardon; and therewith came his father, and, being let in, delivered the indenture which he had taken from his son, unto the king; who thereby perceiving his son's words to be true, changed his purpose for his going to Oxford, and dispatched messengers forth to signify unto the Earl of Northumberland his high constable, and to the Earl of Westmoreland his high marshal, and to others his assured friends, of all the doubtful danger and perilous jeopardy.

Aumerle was deprived of his Dukedom as punishment, but soon got back into favour, and on his father's death succeeded

to the title of Duke of York. He does not appear in either of the *Henry IV* plays, but makes his reappearance in *Henry V* as Duke of York.

ANOTHER ROOM IN THE CASTLE

This scene follows in Windsor, and shows us Exton talking to his servant, of the King's hint that he wished to be rid of Richard. This whole episode is doubtful. The Chroniclers seem to have copied the incident of Sir Piers of Exton the one from the other. Holinshed copied from Hall, who in his turn had copied it from Fabyan. He appears to have taken it from Caxton, who had added it to his existing chronicle in a further edition.

> Have I no friend? Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?

Holinshead says that the words of Henry were overheard when he was "*sitting on a daie at his table*".

If so, the results of the question were answered as fatally as the similar question raised by Henry II, when he stated that not one of the cowards he nourished at his table would deliver him from the turbulent priest Becket But every detail of Becket's murder is known, and the King himself did penance for the crime. The murder committed by Exton became to be accepted after many rumours and accounts that the prisoner at Pomfret was starved either at the King's order or through his own determination to be finished with imprisonment. Thomas of Walsingham, who was then living, gives this account. The Percies in their attack against Henry IV charge him with having caused Richard to die of hunger, thirst and the cold. Archbishop Scroop repeated this accusation later. There is one other theory which seems very unlikely and that is that Richard escaped and lived in hiding for nineteen years in Scotland. If this had been so, whose body was publicly exhibited at the Tower? That the skull of Richard was found uninjured when the coffin was opened in Westminster Abbey does not disprove the murder by Exton. Exton could have passed his sword through Richard's body while he was defending himself with the battle-axe he is supposed to have snatched. At the time, of course, men had to be careful what they said or wrote upon the subject. It is obvious, however, that Bolingbroke's future was not safe while Richard lived. Shakespeare's dramatic end to Richard will be the generally accepted story. We like to think that the King, who as a youngster quelled the Wat Tyler rising, at

least ended fighting like a Plantagenet. Shakespeare makes him kill two of Exton's servants before receiving his own death thrust.

WINDSOR. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

This is the last scene of the play, and contains another of those controversial points in history. Hotspur enters with the captive Bishop of Carlisle, who had always been a supporter of Richard, and tells the King that the Abbot of Westminster had died from a clogged conscience and a sour melancholy. The question which historians quarrel over is whether the Abbot at the time was William de Colchester or Richard Harweden, who was reported to have died of an apoplexy. This gives Shakespeare the excuse of his lines, but if the Abbot was Colchester, he outlived Henry.

The scene's purpose is to bring the play to a close with the entry of the coffin containing the body of Richard of Bordeaux! the mightiest of Henry's greatest enemies. Exton is sent away unrewarded and cursed with the fate of a Cain, while Henry plays the penitent, vowing a voyage to the Holy Land.

This is the last scene of Windsor in the historical plays. It may seem strange that it only figures in this play, when the Castle has been so bound up with the royal history of England.

We now come to the merriest of all his plays, however, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, with its twenty-one scenes of Windsor and its neighbourhood. It is a play of the people of the town rather than of the Castle. Sir John Falstaff is the only dubbed knight, for Sir Hugh Evans carries the Sir as parsons today carry the Reverend. The parson in *Love's Labour's Lost* is called *Sir* Nathaniel, and the disreputable village vicar in *As You Like It*, who comes to marry Touchstone and Audrey, is called *Sir* Oliver Martext. Shallow, Slender, Ford, and Page are gentlemen, and so is Master Fenton. Doctor Caius is a foreigner of some standing, since he attends the Court, while Mine Host of the Garter is a jovial innkeeper. Sir John's followers are disreputable hangers-on, and the pages are just servant boys. None of the scenes are laid in the Castle, though they all take place under its loftiness, bristling with towers, embattled terraces, turrets, halls, buttresses, and pinnacles. A Castle that is a city with St. George's Chapel its Cathedral, and the Round Tower its Citadel. For the pilgrim who goes to Windsor in search of history the whole Castle is a mighty chronicle of great people and great events. The pilgrim who goes in search of Shakespeare will find one very reverend shrine connected with him personally. This is now called the Chapter Library. One reaches it by passing through the

Horseshoe Cloisters from the Lower Ward, keeping the West Door of the Chapel on one's right. Facing the North Archway of these Cloisters, which are the houses of the lay-clerks, or singing-men as they were called in Shakespeare's day, one sees a few steps leading to the Northern Ramparts, from which one gets a fine view of the town below, the river, and Eton College beyond. On the left hand of this platform is the entrance of the Chapter House. In Elizabethan times this was the School Hall of the St. George's Choirboys, and it was in this building that the first performance of *The Merry Wives* took place.

Queen Elizabeth had commanded Will Shakespeare to write his *fat knight in love*, and the players entrusted with the task of first presenting the characters on the stage were the Choristers of the Chapel. For such an important first performance, the author would, for his own sake, have superintended rehearsals, especially as Windsor is only a short stage from London. The cast was, no doubt, made up of all the choristers: choir men and boys, the latter playing the women and pages. There are certain payments recorded for plays of that time in the ancient accounts, but no mention of the names of actors. It would be interesting to know who was the first Falstaff in this play. As an old St. George's boy, I have often wondered about this performance, and how lucky my predecessors in the choir were to have met Shakespeare in his own job as producer. We always thought the Falstaff must have been one of the altos, as in most choirs those with the gentlest voices are the most rotund!

WINDSOR. BEFORE PAGE'S HOUSE.

Master Page, by the hospitality he showed to one and all, must have possessed a comfortable house. Since Shakespeare most probably wrote the play in London, he would not trouble to locate exactly the houses where his characters lived, unless he had taken local characters and brought them to life in the play. But the command performance was fixed apparently within a small margin of time for preparation. It is said that Shakespeare worked out the play in but fourteen days. Thomas Betterton, the actor son of a servant of Charles I, and born in 1635, journeyed into Warwickshire in order to glean information there from people who knew Shakespeare. Since Shakespeare returned to Warwickshire a great man, details of his life and work would be matters of very great local interest to the gossips. This play in particular would be of interest to the local inhabitants, in that it carried the caricature of Sir Thomas Lucy, the squire of Charlcote. However, even when

characters and the homes in which they live are purely fictitious, there are many people who will claim the right of saying, "This is the place." As a Windsor boy I heard a good deal about where Page's house might be or Ford's was, but I don't think anyone could have been positive, unless some one like Betterton had got it more or less first-hand from someone who had heard it second-hand. Whether I got it from a learned Canon who spent much thought on the subject, or just imagined it on first reading the play, I don't really know, but I have got it in my head that Page's House was on the edge of the town on the right side of the Long Walk looking from the Castle Park Gates. The same vague memory tells me that Ford's House was on the corner of Thames Street and the Datchet Lane. The opening of this play always thrills me, especially when the Nikolai Overture is played before it, as this was the first professional play I acted in, with Matheson Lang as the best Falstaff I ever saw in the play. What a lovely first scene of mellow hospitality in Elizabethan England, for although the play is laid in the days of Henry IV, the atmosphere, like in all the plays, is Elizabethan. And what a glorious collection of characters! Shallow, Slender, Sir Hugh Evans, Master Page, Falstaff, Bardolph, Nym and Pistol, Anne Page, the two Merry Wives themselves and Simple. There is the quarrel between Master Shallow and Falstaff which we have discussed under Charlcote and Sir Thomas Lucy, and then the jolly Page asking all to drink down unkindness in good wine and to stay to dinner of a venison pasty. The scene between sweet Anne Page and Master Slender is one of Shakespeare's many gems.

SCENE II. THE SAME.

A very short scene in which the Welsh Parson gives Simple a letter for Mistress Quickly, who lives at the house of Doctor Caius in order to get her help in furthering Master Slender's chances for the winning of Anne Page's hand. Quickly is a gossip of Mistress Page's and Simple is hurried off so that the Welshman can return to Master Page's dinner, since no good Welshman would willingly miss the cheese. "*There's pippins and seese to come.*"

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

There is still a Garter Inn within a stone's throw of the Castle Walls. It is an old inn too, which is all in its favour, and one can get as good cheer there today for man and car as ever one could in the old days for man and beast. Its full title today is THE STAR AND GARTER. It is a popular training quarters for Knights of the

Ring. There is a fine old coaching yard entrance and hams are hung from the rafters. Some people say that this is not the inn of the play, but that it was nearer to the Curfew Tower. I can see no reason why it should not be, and like to think that it is, especially when one takes a peep into that old-world kitchen, where Sir John could easily have sat.

At the opening of this scene poor Falstaff tells Mine Host that he is no longer able to sit at ten pounds a week, and must draw in by turning away some of his followers. Mine Host is willing to take Bardolph off his hands and to turn him into a tapster, a life well suited to one whose face was covered with bubukles, whelks, knobs, and flames of fire, that were sometimes blue and sometimes red. A life too that Bardolph had desired. Pistol, envious of his companion being put into such proximity of good liquor, has nothing but scorn for the trade, though in the play of *Henry V* we find him married to Dame Quickly and so, Mine Host of THE BOAR'S HEAD in Eastcheap. Then his attitude is very different.

As soon as Bardolph has followed his new master to take up his duties of the spigot, Falstaff unfolds a new plan for making money. He turns to Love as a last resort, and plans to turn his sex appeal into capital. "*Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife.*" An entertaining woman, married to a man of good substance, who, though allowing her the rule of his purse, was soured with melancholy and jealousy, was to Falstaff a likely victim to his charms, especially as he took the merry twinkle in her eyes for a personal leer of invitation to him. After all, was he not a knight, while her husband was a mere gentleman? But having gone to the labour of writing her a lengthy letter, he thinks he may as well kill two birds with one stone, and so has copied out the letter word for word, but addressing the second one to Mistress Ford's great friend, Mistress Page, who, he imagines, has also given him such good eyes that they seemed to scorch him like a burning-glass. If the grumbling Ford gave his wife the purse-strings, the easy-going Page would do even more for his. He gives one letter for delivery to Pistol and the other to Nym, but for their own purposes these rogues refuse to sully their reputations with such a questionable errand, and Falstaff appoints his little page, Robin, to sail as his pinnace to the golden shores he intends the Merry Wives to be. "*They shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both.*"

Leaving Pistol and Nym to take care of themselves, he leaves behind two crafty conspirators, who in revenge for being

thus "turn'd off" plan to betray Falstaff to Ford and Page, hoping to gain reward from the wronged husbands.

A ROOM IN DOCTOR CAIUS'S HOUSE.

There are two people in this play who might have lived within the Castle walls. We know that Sir Hugh Evans is a schoolmaster, and that young William, the son of the Pages, is his pupil. He is of some authority in Windsor, since in the first scene he is one of the umpires with Master Page and Mine Host to settle the dispute between Shallow and Falstaff. He is also a singer, for he chants a miserable madrigal when waiting for his duel with the Frenchman. He it is who organizes the children in their Fairy Masque at Herne's Oak. He has taught them their parts. This all points to the likelihood that he was one of the singing, or minor, canons of St. George's, who combined the duties of singing services with those of the master to the Choir School. In which case a Sir Hugh Evans in real life may have assisted Shakespeare in the spade work of instructing his choristers in their parts for the Command Performance. The Welsh being famed for good voices, why not a Welsh singing master at the School of St. George's? In which case Sir Hugh would have resided next to the Horseshoe Cloisters. The scene in the fourth act with William has little to do with the play, and it seems to me was written as an interlude of topical jesting. It would have amused the hard-working choirboys at rehearsals, as well as the good-natured Parson Hugh. A minor canon instructing boys to sing anthems in Latin would look upon Latin Grammar as the most important study for his pupils. Certainly Shakespeare has no scene set in the house of Sir Hugh, but let us give him a house in the cloisters and a stall in the chancel of St. George's Chapel. The other possible inhabitant of the Lower Ward in the Castle is Doctor Caius. He is evidently an eminent physician, for we find him in this scene going to his closet to fetch some simples to take with him to the Court. And to the Court he goes in some style with Jack Rugby, his page, following at his heels armed with a rapier. To go to the Court would be to mount the slope to the Upper Ward, through the Norman Gateway. There were many houses in the Lower Ward suitable for the Court Physician. Had he lived in the town he would have said to Rugby: "*Follow my heels to the Castle.*"

That Caius was an important person in Windsor is obvious, since Mistress Page is against her husband in wishing Anne to marry Slender, because she sees a better match in Doctor Caius.

The wife of a Court Physician would have some standing in Windsor.

Slender has sent his man, Simple, on the advice of the Welsh Parson, to beg the help of Dame Quickly in furthering the match between him and Anne, and while Simple is praising his master, Rugby, who has been posted to watch for his master's return, runs in saying that he is coming. Simple is hidden in the closet, where the Doctor not only discovers him, but the reason of his coming, which makes him write a challenge to Sir Hugh Evans, for interfering with his love affair with Anne. When Simple has gone with the letter, and Rugby has followed his master to the Court, Master Fenton also comes to get the old woman's voice in his behalf with Anne.

BEFORE PAGE'S HOUSE.

The opening of this second act can only be described as "delightful", and anyone who had the privilege of seeing those glorious and grand ladies of the stage, Dame Ellen Terry and Dame Madge Kendal, together in these parts will for ever associate this piece of rollicking comedy with them. The plot now begins to move rapidly. Ford and Page enter with Pistol and Nym, betraying Falstaff's love for their wives. Ford is determined to sift the matter with what patience he can, while the merry Page laughs at the whole idea. There is a curious slip here, which some may take as a proof of the speed in which Shakespeare had to write this play. In the first scene of all, Page is alluded to as Master *Thomas* Page, while Mistress Page in this scene calls him *George*. He calls her Meg, which is no doubt a name of endearment, and one would expect her to call him Tom. There seems no reason for changing the names unless it was an oversight at rehearsals, or an error of the printers. Perhaps the name was changed from Thomas to George for some local reason. Shallow and Mine Host enter in high glee with the news of the duel which is to be fought between the Doctor and the Parson, and the scene closes with Ford asking Mine Host to allow him an introduction to Falstaff at the inn under an assumed name of Brook, and in disguise.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

This is a room on the first floor, which would be the private eating room for an honoured guest, which, of course, Falstaff would have taken, owing to his knighthood. The text shows us that it is upstairs when Bardolph announces that one Master

Brook is *below*, and would speak with him. Falstaff is in a good mood. He has expended his rage against Pistol, refusing to lend him a penny, and has interviewed the old rogue Dame Quickly who makes an appointment for him to visit Mistress Ford during her husband's absence, between ten and eleven. She also makes him promise to send Mistress Page his own little page, Robin, who, she points out, will be able to act as a go-between. Falstaff is disappointed to hear that Page is seldom from home, but he surrenders his page on her having expressed the hope that there will come a time when he will be absent.

There is nothing an audience likes better in a comedy than to know everything when the characters themselves know nothing, and so make mistakes of which they are fully aware. This scene when Ford arrives disguised as Brook follows that good old rule. The audience get even more than they expect, for when Ford as Brook gives Falstaff money to lay siege to the honesty of his wife, the knight says roguishly in all innocence that he will be with her at her own appointment between ten and eleven. Falstaff leaves Ford to get himself ready for his wooing, for he has said to himself in this scene, after hearing of the wives' passion for him, "*I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee? Good body, I thank thee.*" Ford is left to give private vent to his rage, and like all jealous people, finds a morbid exhilaration in being wronged. "*Heaven be praised for my jealousy,*" he exclaims. "*I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page.*" To be able to think of laughing at his friend because he in his turn has laughed at him for being jealous, and the cause of laughter being the discovery of his wife's frailty, shows the mean state of mind into which jealousy and selfishness have driven him.

"*Page is an ass, a secure ass. He will trust his wife. He will not be jealous.*" He feeds himself with the glee of self-pity.

A FIELD NEAR WINDSOR.

Here we see Caius waiting impatiently for the arrival of his antagonist, the Parson. It is past the hour appointed for the duel, but Mine Host has purposely arranged for them to meet in different places. Sir Hugh is waiting near Frogmore, so that this scene, in order to be safely distant from Frogmore, would seem to be laid in one of the fields to the west side of the Castle near the Thames bank. Mine Host, who enters with Shallow, Slender, and Page, tells Caius that in order to meet

the parson he must accompany him through the fields to Frogmore, where, he tells him as an added sop to make him go, he will bring him to a farmhouse where Anne Page is a-feasting. Aside he tells the others to go through the town to Frogmore, so that they may reach the parson first, and see what humour he is in. The way through the town being, therefore, a short cut, indicates the position of the field in question.

Act III, Scene 1, shows us Evans in :

A FIELD NEAR FROGMORE.

He is questioning Simple as to whether he can see any sign of the Doctor's arrival, but Simple says that he has looked the pittieward, the Parkward, Old Windsor way, and every way but the town way, so he is sent to look that way too. The pittieward would mean the way towards the pits. These might be one of the gravel-pits of the park, or perhaps more likely the *saw-pit* in the vicinity of Herne's Oak, mentioned by Mistress Page in Act IV, Scene 4. This pit would have been of some note and size, as it would be here that the foresters would bring the logs to saw up for the use of the Castle fires. There is an interesting account of Windsor Park in a Journal kept by the Secretary of the Duke of Würtemburg to whose visit to the Castle there are many topical allusions in this play. Dated 1592, the description reads :

> Her Majesty appointed an elderly respectable English nobleman to attend upon your Princely Grace, and required and ordered the same not only to shew to your Princely Grace the splendidly beautiful and royal castle of Windsor, but also to make the residence pleasant and merry with shooting and hunting the numerous herds of game ; for it is well known that the aforesaid place, Windsor, has upwards of sixty parks adjoining each other, full of fallow deer and other game, of all sorts of colours, which may be driven from one park (all being enclosed with hedges) to another, and thus one can enjoy a splendid and royal sport. The hunters (deer or park-keepers) who live in separate but excellent houses, as has been appointed, made excellent sport for your Princely Grace. In the first Park your Princely Grace shot a fallow deer through the thigh, and it was soon after captured by the dogs. In the next you hunted a stag for a long time over a broad and pleasant plain, with a pack of remarkably good hounds ; your Princely Grace first shot it with an English crossbow, and the hounds at length out-wearied and captured it.
>
> In the third you noosed a stag, but somewhat too quickly, for he was caught too soon, and almost before he came right out upon

the plain. These three deer were sent to Windsor, and were presented to your Princely Grace: one of these was done justice to in the apartments of Monsieur de Beauvois, the French ambassador.

This journal also refers to *His Princely Grace* hearing the music of an organ, and of other instruments, with the voices of little boys, as well as a sermon an hour long, in a church covered with lead. This was of course the Chapel of St. George.

Simple would have had no chance of seeing Caius approaching on the Old Windsor way, since Old Windsor is farther from the town than is Frogmore, and so turning round hopelessly, he sees the party climbing the stile behind him. In the meantime, the good parson has been keeping up his drooping spirits with a verse of Kit Marlowe's (the authorship is disputed between him and Shakespeare, since it is included in *England's Helicon* in 1600 as Marlowe's but in Jaggard's 1599 edition it is included as one of Shakespeare's sonnets). "*Come live with me, and be my love.*" In his agitation, however, the poor cleric confuses it with the 137th Psalm. Needless to say the duel is never fought, since Mine Host disarms them both, in order that they may keep their limbs and in argument hack the English language with their Welsh and French tongues respectively. He takes the blame for directing them to wrong places and urges the company to follow him in order to drink burnt sack. So Evans and Caius depart together the best of friends, and we meet the whole party on their way back to the Garter Inn during the next scene, which is laid in:

THE STREET IN WINDSOR.

The three most important streets in Windsor, both now and in those days, are High Street, Thames Street, and Peascod Street. Of these Thames Street is the most stately, and can claim the honour of *the* street of the town, since it sweeps up the hill under the ramparts of the castle. Here we meet Mistress Page with Falstaff's boy, Robin, who are accosted by Ford on his way to keep the appointment he has imposed upon himself for finding Falstaff with his wife. He asks where she got the pretty weathercock, Robin, and on hearing that the boy had been Falstaff's, he thinks Page is without brains, especially as Mistress Page is going to see his wife, in company with Robin. The clock giving him his cue, he is about to follow Mistress Page to his house, when he encounters the party on their return from Frogmore. He invites them home for good cheer, but Shallow

and Slender excuse themselves on the plea of having appointed to dine with Anne Page, and Slender hopes that he has Page's goodwill for his wooing. Page says he has, but that his wife is for the Doctor. Mine Host then puts in a good word for Master Fenton, but Page will have none of him, saying that he kept company with the wild Prince and Poins, and was of too high a class, and that his money shall not pave the way in fortune for a courtier. Mine Host says that he must go to drink canary with Falstaff, and so Ford leads Page, Caius, and Evans to his house in order to be shown a monster.

A ROOM IN FORD'S HOUSE.

This is always referred to by actors as "*The First Buckbasket Scene.*"

The merry wives order the great basket of laundry to be brought in, and instruct the servants that when they are called from the brew-house they are to take up the basket without any staggering and carry it among the whitsters or bleachers in Datchet mead, and there empty it into the muddy ditch close by the Thames side. Robin, who is in the plot so far that he has not told his former master that Mistress Page is in the house, announces that the Knight requests Mistress Ford's company.

Mistress Page hides, and Falstaff enters, and without cogging or prating, obliges Queen Elizabeth by showing himself in love. Like Henry V in his wooing of Katharine, Sir John woos bluntly. He says that he is not one of these lisping haw-thorn buds that come like women in men's apparel and smell like Bucklersbury in simple-time. In Shakespeare's time Bucklersbury was the street branching off from the east end of Cheapside, and was the trading place of the druggists and herbalists. It would have been the sweetest smelling street of the City with its wafts of lavender and rosemary. Mistress Ford protests that she fears Falstaff loves Mistress Page, which Falstaff denies with similes very detrimental to the listening lady. Mistress Ford tells him that he shall one day find how much she loves him, and this is the cue for Mistress Page to be announced by Robin as sweating and blowing and looking wildly. She being the last person Falstaff wants to meet at that moment, he hides behind the arras, and then Mistress Page enters with the news that Ford is on the way with half Windsor at his heels to search for a gentleman he says is in his house taking advantage of his absence. Mistress Ford says that there is such a one in

the house, and that she fears for his peril more than for her own shame. Mistress Page, pretending to think of it on the spur of the moment, suggests that if her friend be of any reasonable stature, he might creep into the buck-basket and hide amongst the dirty linen while her servants should take it away to Datchet. Falstaff on hearing Mistress Ford cry out that he is too big, dashes out to see, and is confronted with the accusation of being false to her, by Mistress Page. He quickly whispers that he loves her and none but her, and gets into the basket, while the wives, hardly able to contain their mirth, hustle the servants to put the cowl-staff through the handles, while Mistress Ford tells them loudly to carry it to the laundress in Datchet mead. Ford enters confident at finding his enemy, and demands whither they are taking it. Mistress Ford retaliates at his inquisitiveness, and he lets them go, anxious to begin the search. He offers his friends his keys and bids them ascend his chambers and unkennel the fox. Up they all go to see, leaving the wives alone. There is a point here which proves the play to have been hastily written. Mistress Page says: "*What a taking was he in, when your husband asked who was in the basket.*" The *who* was later amended to *what*, but even so Ford had asked no such question, although in Scene 5 Falstaff tells Master Brook that the jealous knave asked the servants once or twice *what* was in the basket. This passage can only be excused as being an exaggeration on Falstaff's part, in order to heighten his danger in Brook's mind. The wives agree that Falstaff and Ford must be punished further, and plan another assignation with Falstaff. Having searched the house, Ford begrudgingly begs everyone's pardon for his mistake, and invites them in to dinner.

A ROOM IN PAGE'S HOUSE.

In the Quartos this scene ends the act as Scene 5, but in this position it is better since it allows the results of the buck-basket tragedy to finish the act with greater drama than this scene can give. Some editors prefer to call the scene BEFORE PAGE'S HOUSE, on the grounds that Anne would not be talking to her lover, Fenton, inside the house, and also that Slender is ordered by Shallow to go *in*, as well as Mistress Page saying that her daughter must needs go *in*. There is a lot of sense in this alteration, and makes the grouping more natural, though the repeated *in* might well be indicating an inner room. Fenton tells Anne that he cannot win her father's consent because he thinks him too great of birth, and objects to his riotous past with

the Prince and Poins, thinking that he is trying to get back the money he wildly spent by the help of Anne's dowry. Like Bassanio and many another Elizabethan hero who made a practice of being fortune-hunting suitors, Fenton acknowledges that this was his first motive, but that since he had wooed Anne he had discovered the worth of herself. Anne tells him to go on trying to win her father's consent, and is then dragged away to be wooed by Slender, who is Page's choice for her.

Slender in love is funnier than Falstaff in love, for which the play was written. All his boasts of bravery go for nothing when confronted by *Sweet Anne Page*, although his servant Simple has said that he has fought with a warrener, and he has already told Anne that bear-baiting is meat and drink to him, and that he had seen Sackerson loose twenty times and had taken him by the chain, which made the women shriek, because bears are *very ill favoured rough things*. From the time of Henry VIII the bear-gardens were open on Sundays in Southwark for the price of a halfpenny admission. Sackerson was a very famous animal who was baited in Paris Garden on Bankside. The absurdity of Slender taking him by the chain is colossal. The young Gloucestershire gentleman had a great opinion of himself as a fencer too. "*I bruised my shin the other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence*," he had told her in the first scene. A *master of fence* was the highest degree that could be gained by a swordsman. There were three degrees: master, provost, and scholar. The three adventures, of Sackerson, the warrener or gamekeeper, and the master of fence, were no doubt Slender's three great stories. Having exhausted these on his adored one, he asks his Uncle Shallow to tell her the jest how his father stole two geese out of a pen. Unfortunately we never hear this story, and it remains a mystery like the tale of Old Grouse in the Gunroom, of Goldsmith's play. Slender's idea of a jest, however, is very feeble, so probably the story had little point, for when Anne asks him: "*What is your will?*" he answers with great hilarity: "*My will? 'Od's heartlings, that's a pretty jest, indeed! I ne'er made my will yet. I thank heaven; I am not such a sickly creature, I give heaven praise.*"

No wonder that Anne asks her mother not to marry her to the fool. But her mother's choice of the renowned French Doctor is not much better to her way of thinking, for she says she would rather be "*set quick i' the earth, and bowl'd to death with turnips*".

Charles Knight compares this sentence with Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* speech which says: "*Would I had been set in ground, all but the head of me, and had my brains bowl'd at.*"

In Sir Thomas Roe's account of a voyage to the East Indies, there is a story of the Mogul barbarously murdering one of his women in this way.

The scene closes with Quickly once more being rewarded by Fenton, and saying to herself that she will do what she can for all three suitors because she had promised them, but most of all she would favour Fenton.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

Here is Falstaff ready to talk to the audience of his ghastly experience. Before he begins he calls for Bardolph to fetch him a quart of sack, and then asks Fate whether he has lived to be carried in a basket like a barrow of butcher's offal, and to be thrown into the Thames? He goes on to say that the rogues "*slighted him into the river*". Now the servants' instructions were to go to Datchet mead and empty it into the muddy ditch close by the Thames side. Therefore, the exact locality of where this stupendous event occurred is a problem. In this scene we are now discussing, Falstaff tells Ford as Brook, that he was carried to Datchet Lane. Now the Datchet mead lies under the North Terrace of the Castle, and was open ground with a footpath or road running through it till William III enclosed it with a wall. The way leading to it from the direction of the town was Datchet Lane. The Thames is responsible for the muddy ditch, made by its waters during flood periods. It was, therefore, into a creek filled with flood-water that Falstaff was dumped.

One cannot imagine the Falstaff of the Histories being so put upon as he is in this play. His ingenuity in getting out of difficulties is so brilliant in the Henry plays, but here he goes on being made more and more of a fool. It seems incredible that he shall again fall for a second interview so quickly. Certainly he speaks many immortal sentences that in strings of surprising words are equal to his language in the Histories, but his wit is more against himself than others. Had he said to Brook that he had another appointment with Mistress Ford in order to fool Ford, then we should have had our beloved Falstaff of the Histories. But alas, he is deceived by Ford with whom we have no sympathy at all, and he merely plays into his hands. It is the wives who have the quick wit in this play. The audience

know now that Ford will not again be fooled with a buck-basket, though they may think that this new and feebler Falstaff may be fool enough to get into it if necessity arises. In a modern farce no doubt he would, but Shakespeare has too much affection for him to let him be fooled quite to the top of his bent: at least in a buck-basket. He has had his glorious say about that. He has described himself as a hissing hot horseshoe being cooled in the Thames. Yet in his anxiety to sample more purses belonging to Master Brook, he stoutly maintains that he will be thrown into Etna before giving up his resolution made on Brook's behalf. He goes off to get ready for his appointment, leaving Ford, with full knowledge now that Falstaff will be with his wife, telling the audience that though the fat knight cannot creep into a halfpenny purse or a pepper-box, he will search such places lest the devil that guides him shall aid him to do impossible feats. So ends the third act and we open the next with:

THE STREET.

This is the scene we have already discussed in our attempt to prove Sir Hugh the master of the Choir School. Little William is being taken there by his mother, but they meet the master, who tells them that it is a special leave-day of play. Master Slender has procured the boys a holiday. Now why should Slender have the power to beg a holiday? Today such a thing happens when a distinguished Old Boy revisits his school. Is this then meant to be the connection of this Gloucestershire family of Shallow with Windsor? Can we assume that Slender was in his day a boarder at the Choir School? Or that he attended it and lodged with the Pages, and so fell in love with Anne at an early stage? Or was it just put in by Shakespeare because he asked, as no doubt he would have done, that the boys should have a playing day as a reward for acting in his comedy?

A ROOM IN FORD'S HOUSE.

This is the Second Buck-basket Scene, and more uproarious than the other one. It has the advantage of a buck-basket that is this time searched, and searched thoroughly with a madman throwing the linen this way and that, while the quaint characters around him are being smothered with sheets and tablecloths, and as Falstaff described the contents to Brook, *foul shirts and smocks, socks, foul stockings, greasy napkins, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease,* making in all, *the rankest compound of villainous smell that ever offended*

nostril. Poor Falstaff gets little time for his lovemaking with Mistress Ford, for no sooner is he told that Ford is out shooting birds, than in comes Mistress Page. Falstaff has just time to hide in the inner chamber, when she bursts in with the news, as before, of Ford's arrival, only this time making it much worse. Though such words as *dead man* and *murder* frighten Falstaff, when he hears the suggestion that he shall go again in the basket, he runs out of hiding to draw the line at that, suggesting all sorts of ways which are quickly shown to be impossible and dangerous. The only means of getting away is to be disguised, and Mistress Ford remembers very conveniently that her maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown upstairs. Falstaff, clutching at this straw, runs off upstairs to put on the gown, and the wives, knowing that the basket will this time be searched, tell the servants to take it up once more on their shoulders but to set it down if so bidden by their master. The basket is found to be empty, but still Ford is confident that Falstaff is somewhere in the house, so insists on all helping in the search. So Mistress Ford, who has had to leave Mistress Page to dress Falstaff, when her husband ordered her downstairs, calls up for her and the old woman to come down since her husband wishes to come into the room. On hearing that the old woman referred to is none other than an old witch he has forbidden to enter his house, Ford resolves to expend some of his rage upon her, and when Mistress Page leads her down with, "*Come, mother Prat, come, give me your hand,*" Ford beats the disguised Falstaff unmercifully out of the doors. Evans is quicker-eyed than Ford, for he says that the old woman must be a witch because he spied a great *peard* under her muffler. "*I like not when a 'oman has a great peard.*" The chase after Mother Prat is one of the most boisterous scenes in the whole of Shakespeare, and great fun. It adds a good deal to the comicality if there are a number of doors to the set and also a gallery from an inside staircase, so that Falstaff can run in at one door and out of another with the whole cavalcade after him led by Ford with his cudgel, and the wives crying out to the others not to let him kill the old woman.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

This very short scene is in reference to the visit of the Duke of Würtemburg to Windsor. He travelled under the title of the Counte Mombeliard, and was given a passport from Lord Howard which was in the form of an open letter addressed to all

Justices, Mayors, and Bailiffs, stating that the nobleman was to go where he pleased and that he was to pay nothing for expenses, which were to be borne by the Queen's government. According to the title of his secretary's journal, this "*Princely Grace*", as he called him, besides being the Duke of Würtemburg, was also Duke of Teck, Count of Mumpelgart, Baron of Heidenheim, Knight of St. Michael in France, and of the Garter in England. This last honour evidently brought him on this visit to Windsor. Bardolph tells Mine Host that the Germans desire three of the horses in his stables in order to ride and meet the Duke their master, who is on his way to the Court. These Germans had already stayed for a week, and Mine Host had been forced to turn away other guests, so intended to make them pay well, for he had evidently not heard that the Duke travelled at the Crown's expense. A good deal has been written about these scenes, but, as I shall suggest in the next Garter Scene, the cozenage business has a more direct bearing on the plot of the play than a faithful reproduction of the nobleman's actual visit.

A Room in Ford's House.

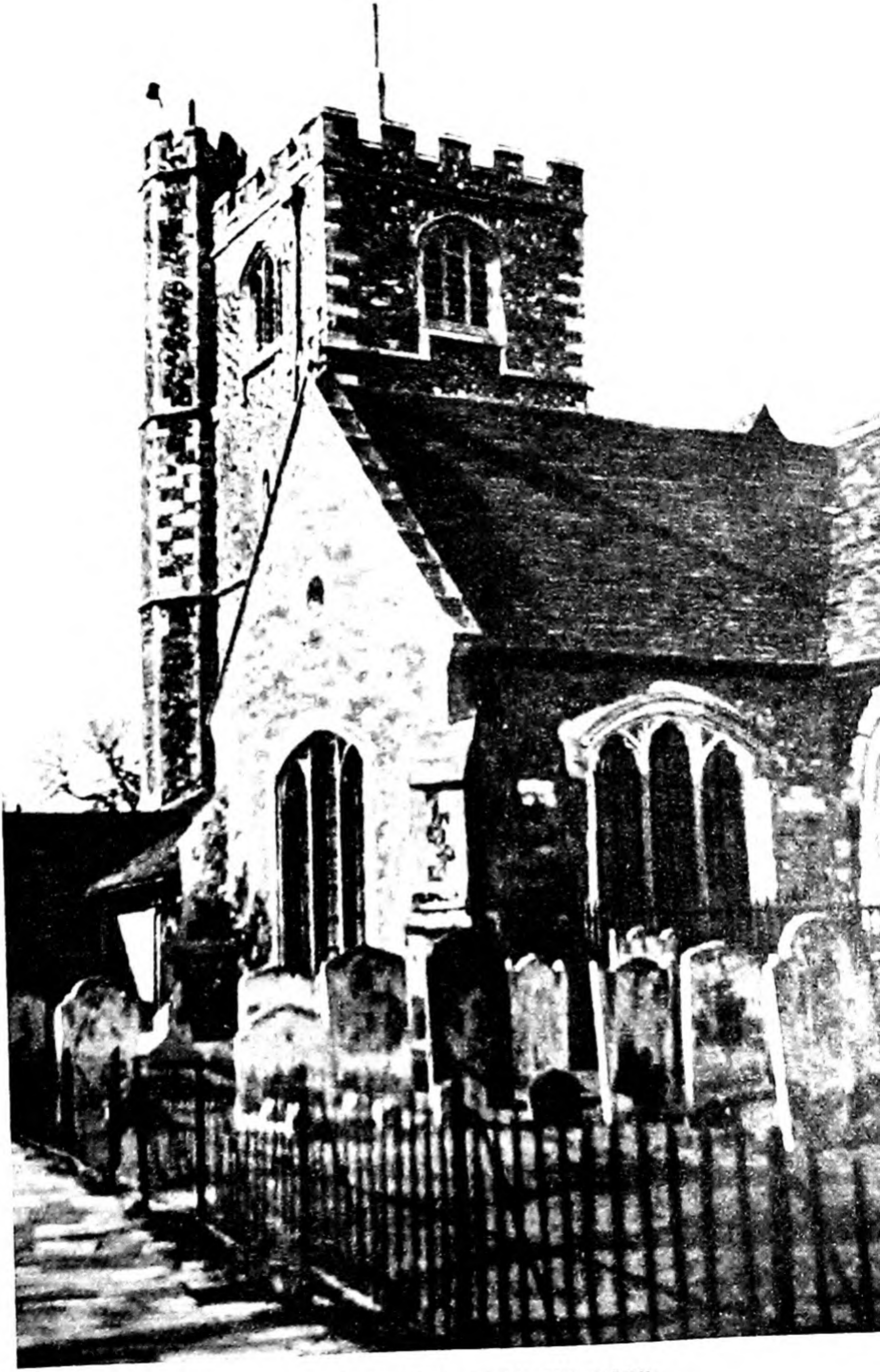
This scene is given up to the reconcilation of Ford and his wife, and the plans for Falstaff's further discomfiture. They decide to appoint another meeting with him at Herne's Oak in the Park at midnight, and to instruct him to disguise himself as Herne, the Demon Huntsman of Windsor. On meeting with the knight, Anne and William Page, with a number of children dressed as fairies and goblins, were to dance out of the saw-pit and frighten the old man, by burning him with lighted tapers. Ford goes to buy masks for the fairies and goblins. Evans goes to teach the children their behaviours. Page goes to buy white silk for Anne's dress as Queen of the Fairies, and he resolves that Slender shall steal her away and marry her at Eton. His wife goes to Doctor Caius, to tell him to steal away Anne who shall not be dressed in the white silk her husband has gone to buy but in green. Her reasons for wishing the Doctor to be her son-in-law are that besides having money, he has potent friends at Court, which she prefers to the idiotic, though well-landed, Slender.

A Room in the Garter Inn.

This repetition of title is used here by most editors, but it has been pointed out by Mr. F. A. Marshall that it is truer to the action of the scene if it is called "The Courtyard of

THE GARTER INN". It certainly makes the entrances of the various characters seem more natural if they enter below, and above them is the gallery built outside the private rooms. Falstaff can then appear from his own door and talk down to Simple and Mine Host. He has just returned from his beating in order to disrobe the disguise of the fat woman, because Simple, who has called with a message from his master, Slender, but is waiting till the old woman comes out before going up himself, has seen the old witch enter the room. Mine Host, not approving of an old woman entering one of his guests' bedrooms, calls to the knight to send her down. He is not going to have Simple spreading scandalous tales about his house. Falstaff, admitting that the old woman was with him but has gone, answers Simple's questions with his best wit, and it is then that Bardolph dashes in on foot, crying out that Mine Host has been cozened by the Germans, who had ridden his horses beyond Eton with him clinging behind one of them, when he was thrown off into a slough, while they rode away from him like three mad Doctor Faustuses.

Mine Host merely tells him that they have only gone to meet their master the Duke, adding that Germans are honest men. We now have two quick entrances, one after the other. Sir Hugh rushes on and tells Mine Host for his own good that a friend of his has reported how three German swindlers have cheated the hosts of Reading, Maidenhead, and Colebrook out of horses and money. The moment he runs off one way, Dr. Caius rushes on to say that hearing the Garter Inn had made great preparation for a "*duke of Jarmany*", nobody in the Court had any knowledge of such a person's arrival. This is surely an invented story by Evans and Caius in order to get their revenge upon the *scurvy, cogging host of the Garter* who had made them both a laughing-stock in the affair of the duel. They had agreed upon seeking some revenge, and had probably bribed Bardolph in the matter of the horses. To carry a friendly warning would be no revenge, but to pretend to do so, in order to upset thoroughly Mine Host's peace of mind concerning his horses, his unpaid scores, and the loss of money from turned-off guests, as well as no Duke to make up for it, was revenge indeed. There is no further mention of this cozenage after this scene, except that in the following scene with Fenton Mine Host says that his mind is heavy. But he does not appear in the last act at all, so we may take it that Shakespeare means this to be the completed revenge of the Parson and Doctor upon him. No doubt they both had a



THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN,
OVERLOOKING THE FIELD OF BARNET

WARWICK'S MEMORIAL AT BARNET. HERE THE KINGMAKER FELL

good laugh over his discomfiture. The end of the scene shows us Quickly come to lure Sir John to Windsor Forest at midnight, once more to meet with Mistress Ford.

A Room in the Garter Inn

Here we find Fenton telling Mine Host of the plot planned for that night, and how during the jest to be played on Falstaff, Page has arranged for Anne and Slender to be married at Eton, while Mistress Page has also arranged for her to meet a priest at the Deanery in order to marry the Doctor. Fenton promising to make good Mine Host's losses over the Germans and to pay him over and above, asks him to get the Vicar at church between twelve and one, as Anne has promised to steal away with him.

A Room in the Garter Inn

The last act is opened here with Falstaff finishing his conversation with Quickly, who promises him to find a chain and a pair of horns for his disguise as Herne. She goes as Ford arrives for the last time as Brook. Falstaff, having hopes that his third assignation will prove lucky, promises Brook that he will be revenged upon Ford that very night.

Windsor Park

This is the castle-ditch or moat at the foot of the walls, and in it are hiding Page with his fellow conspirators, Shallow and Slender. They wait here for the distant sight of the fairy tapers, when Slender is to approach Anne in white and carry her off to Eton.

The Street in Windsor

Here we find the other conspirators, Mistress Page and Mistress Ford, giving final instructions to Dr. Caius, to lead away Anne to the Deanery, and reminding him that she will be dressed in green.

Windsor Park

This little scene of one speech of some four lines spoken by Evans disguised as a jackanapes is to show the arrival of the fairies at the saw-pit close to the Oak, and as they trip according to the parson's instructions he urges them to remember their parts, and to do as he had rehearsed them.

ANOTHER PART OF THE PARK

This scene should most certainly have been titled HERNE'S OAK. Visitors to Windsor, especially those who have read Harrison Ainsworth's *Windsor Castle*, will still ask to be directed to this Herne's Oak. There is an oak, and a large one, in the vicinity of this haunted tree that was shunned at night even in Elizabethan times, but it is not *the* oak. The real Herne's Oak was almost for certain cut down in the reign of George III. There is a story connected with it concerning a Mr. Nicholas, who was a landscape artist, happening to visit Old Windsor as a guest of the Dowager Countess of Kingston. He employed his time in making many sketches of old trees in the Park, and on one occasion the conversation of some visitors led to a discussion upon Herne's Oak. Among the company were a Mrs. Bonfoy and her daughter, Lady Ely, who were very much in the royal circle about 1800. Anxious to find out the truth of the legend, Nicholson asked Lady Ely to discover what she could from the King, whose good memory and long association with Windsor would make him more qualified to identify the tree than any other. The King told Lady Ely that when he was a young man it was reported to him that there were a number of old oaks in the park which had become unsightly and should be taken down. He gave his permission for this clearing, but regretted it bitterly afterwards when he found that the remains of Herne's Oak had been cut down with others.

There is another account which differs from this story. It was written by a Mr. Jesse in his *Gleanings*, published in 1834:

> The most interesting tree at Windsor, for there can be little doubt of its identity, is the celebrated Herne's Oak. There is indeed a story prevalent in the neighbourhood respecting its destruction. It was stated to have been felled by command of his late Majesty George III about fifty years ago, under peculiar circumstances. The whole story, the details of which it is unnecessary to enter upon, appeared so improbable, that I have taken some pains to ascertain the inaccuracy of it, and have now every reason to believe that it is perfectly unfounded. In following the footpath which leads from the Windsor Road to Queen Adelaide's Lodge, in the Little Park, about half-way on the right, a dead tree may be seen close to an avenue of elms. This is what is pointed out as Herne's Oak.
>
> To set the matter at rest, however, I will now repeat the substance of some information given to me relative to Herne's Oak by Mr. Ingalt, the present respectable bailiff and manager of

Windsor Home Park. He states that he was appointed to that situation by George III, about forty years ago. On receiving his appointment he was directed to attend upon the King at the Castle, and on arriving there he found His Majesty with "the old Lord Winchilsea". After a little delay, the King set off to walk in the park, attended by Lord Winchilsea, and Mr. Ingalt was desired to follow them. Nothing was said to him until the King stopped opposite an oak tree. He then turned to Mr. Ingalt and said, "I brought you here to point out this tree to you. I commit it to your especial charge, and take care that no damage is ever done to it. I had rather that every tree in the park should be cut down than that this tree should be hurt. THIS IS HERNE'S OAK. This was the tree still standing near Queen Elizabeth's Walk, and is the same tree which I have mentioned in my GLEANINGS IN NATURAL HISTORY. Sapless and leafless it certainly is, and its rugged bark has all disappeared.

'Its boughs are moss'd with age,
And high top bald with gray antiquity;'——

but there it stands, and long may it do so, an object of interest to every admirer of our immortal bard. In this shape it has been, probably, long before the recollection of the oldest person living. Its trunk, however, appears sound, like a piece of ship-timber, and it has always been protected by a strong fence round it—a proof of the care which has been taken of the tree, and of the interest which is attached to it."

It is recorded that during a great gale of wind that occurred soon after this event related three ancient oaks were blown down in the Little Park, and that one of them was cut up and made into boxes and other Shakespearian relics, because the tree in question was believed by many to be Herne's Oak. The dell which had been identified as the saw-pit of the play was eventually filled up with rubbish from the Castle, while the footpath to Datchet, which had been removed to give more privacy to the Castle, ran across it.

When the last scene opens we only see Falstaff disguised as Herne with a buck's head on, and his first words ring out warning to the waiting fairies. *The Windsor bell hath struck twelve.*

Poor Sir John. No sooner has he started to embrace Mistress Ford than she tells him that Mistress Page has come with her, to which Falstaff answers: "*Divide me like a brib'd buck, each a haunch.*" With an arm round each of them, and thinking that at last Cupid is making restitution, horns are heard, and the wives, pretending to be very frightened, run away, leaving Falstaff to

face the apparitions alone. It is then that he utters one of his many immortal lines:

> I think the devil will not have me damn'd, lest the oil that is in me should set hell on fire.

And then Shakespeare let himself go into pure fantasy. The stage directions make Sir Hugh Evans dress like a Satyr, and Pistol is brought on as a Hobgoblin. Instead of Anne Page playing the Queen of the Fairies, it is Mistress Quickly who is cast for the part. This alteration is obviously made so that Anne shall not give her plot with Fenton away by her voice being recognized. This arrangement, as printed in the Folio, is much more satisfactory, though many editors give the lines of the Fairy Queen to Anne, as being more physically fitted to speak them, and their example is nearly always followed by producers, who fail to see the added comicality of an old woman as the Queen. In the Quarto Pistol's lines as Hobgoblin are given to him under the name of Puck. I cannot agree with the critics who say that both Quickly and Pistol are out of their characters in this scene, and that the inclusion of their names merely means that they were "*doubling*" the parts. Quickly would do anything to help Anne, even to learning her lines, and Pistol would revel in calling Falstaff "*Vile worm.*" Though Evans is a Satyr in dress, he is yet a jack-a-lantern, or a jackanapes, in that he carries a burning taper, and when he stays the fairies from the dance because he *smells a man of middle earth*, Falstaff utters another immortal sentence: "*Heavens defend me from that Welsh fairy, lest he transform me to a piece of cheese.*"

Then the test is applied. They say that if when they burn him he feels no pain, then he is chaste, but if he start it is the flesh of a corrupted heart. Poor Falstaff once more. He cannot keep back the howl of agony when Evans first applies the flame to his fingers. The end of the song, no doubt well rendered under the parson's direction, turns into boisterous horseplay at the last two lines:

> Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,
> Till candles, and star-light, and moonshine be out.

During this song, the fairies pinch Falstaff. Doctor Caius comes one way, and steals away a fairy in green; Slender another way, and takes off a fairy in white; and Fenton comes, and steals away

Mistress Anne Page. A noise of hunting is made within. All the fairies run away. Falstaff pulls off his buck's head, and rises.

In the Quarto this stage direction is ridiculous, for it makes Caius steal a boy in red, Slender a boy in green, and Fenton, Anne in white. Obviously Anne would be in any colour but green or white. The Folio does not include Shallow in the scene, though the Quarto gives him one line of salutation to Falstaff. He would most likely have been waiting for Slender to bring his bride to Eton, but on seeing that he has made a mess of the whole adventure, the old Justice would have gone home to bed in disgust, and certainly not followed Slender back to the Oak. Falstaff would have run straight back to the Garter Inn, and called for a quart of sack, but that he is stopped by Page and Ford with their wives. Poor Falstaff once more. To think that he should be made an ass and have to own it. Poor Slender too, who does not take his defeat with such philosophy. He screams with rage that he has married a great lubberly boy, a postmaster's boy, and after having obeyed the instructions of Page and Anne. Mistress Page implores her husband's pardon, and tells him that she turned Anne into green and that she is at the deanery wedding Caius. The tables are immediately turned on her too, for on rushes Caius, shouting that he has married *un garçon, a boy*. Mistress Page asks him if he did not take her in green, to which he screams the reply: "*Ay, by gar, and 'tis a boy.*"

But all these amusing misfortunes cease to worry the audience when Fenton enters with Anne, and confesses that they are married after being long contracted.

Master Ford is the first to make their excuses, and the good-natured Page wishes Fenton joy. Falstaff recovers his jocular vein, and Mistress Page wishes Fenton many merry days and urges her good husband to let everyone go home with them and laugh this sport o'er by a country fire. So ends a play of amusing quarrels and good-hearted jesting, in a spirit of tolerance and forgiveness. As we leave the theatre we do not say good-bye to them at the haunted Herne's Oak, but in spirit go with them back into Windsor to the house of the Pages, where in spite of the late, or, rather, early hour, we see them eating and drinking in honour of their new son-in-law and his bride, and all of them, we may be sure, showing good-natured affection to the losers, especially towards Falstaff, whose cup

and platter we may safely say are kept in constant supplies from the Merry Wives of Windsor.

The late Oscar Asche made an interesting departure from tradition in his production of this play at the Adelphi Theatre. He gave the play a winter setting throughout, and how effective it was. Simple sitting on a stile, with his nose blue with cold, jutting out over a muffler. Sir Hugh trembling with cold as well as with fear. Caius slipping here and there, and Falstaff glowing against the snow. The whiteness showed up the strong colours of the costumes. A real picture of The Merry Wives in a very Merry England, and there is no more beautiful town than Windsor under snow.

Chapter Seven

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN SCOTLAND

In planning my journey of pilgrimage to the "locations" of Shakespeare, I made up my mind to visit Scotland after finishing with London, Kent, and Windsor. Hertfordshire was such a near cry to London, however, that I went to St. Albans, Langley, and Barnet before Windsor. The farthest spot from London which he uses in Britain is Forres, so I headed north. I wanted to get to Inverness as quickly as I could, in order to trace the steps of Shakespeare's characters in that greatest of all tragedies, *Macbeth*. However, once on the road, I had to be sensible and make my stages in spots dealt with in the plays. So I visited Bury St. Edmunds, Boston, for the Wash, Newark, and York. These places all had to be fitted into different plays like pieces of a jigsaw, but north there was a play complete to two districts of Scotland, with the exception of one English scene. There was the country of Glamis and the country of Inverness. Both these neighbourhoods possessed names ever associated with *Macbeth*. I made one stop after leaving Yorkshire to visit the wild castle of Warkworth in Northumberland, but all these halting places will be dealt with later. Once over the border, not even my enthusiasm to get into *Macbeth* territory could hurry me past Edinburgh. It was infuriating that Shakespeare had laid no scenes in this beautiful city, for it has the real Shakespearian atmosphere in its magnificent castle, which, like Windsor and Dover, dominates the town.

What scenes he could have written for those ramparts, and what horrors he could have added to those awful dungeons worse than anything in the Tower of London. To go down into the deepest of these dungeons by means of the wooden steps provided for convenience, and then to look up at the door above through which prisoners used to be thrown on to the top of dying and dead prisoners beneath them, is to realize the the horrors of those days. In order that you may realize the full horror, the guide turns out the light and tells you from above just how far you are down in the bowels of the Castle Rock, and that it is now time to hurl down another prisoner who will probably break his arms and legs and yours as well

when he lands on top of you. He opens the door and tells you that this is the cue for you to think you are going to be released, but it is only one more hurtling through the darkness to share your death struggles.

Although Shakespeare has laid no scenes in Edinburgh, and it is Scott and Stevenson whom we think of there the most, there is a connection between him and this city. In 1599, at the urgent request of King James, Queen Elizabeth sent to Edinburgh a company of English players. In writing about this in his *History of Scotland*, Guthrie says: "*I have great reason to think that the immortal Shakespeare was of the number.*" Malone throws cold water on this idea, by pointing out that in 1599 *Henry V* was produced, and that it would have been inconvenient for Shakespeare to have left London. In the parish of Perth there is a record that a company of players were in that town in 1589, and in Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland* he writes: "*If they were English actors who visited Perth in that year, Shakespeare might be one of them.*"

There was apparently a later visit of the Lord Chamberlain's company of players which is estimated to have been during the autumn of 1601, within a period that shows no record of Shakespeare's players performing before Queen Elizabeth. In Richard Manningham's "Notes" it shows that Shakespeare's players were in London at the beginning of 1602, and yet in the Office Book of the Treasurer there is no performance recorded between Shrove Tuesday of 1601 and St. Stephen's Day of 1602. It has been pointed out by those who wish to have us believe that Shakespeare went to Scotland and got his atmosphere first hand, that if the company to which Shakespeare belonged was in Scotland in October 1601, it would be probable that he was with them. In September he attended his father's burial at Stratford, when The Globe season would be finished for the summer, and the winter season at Blackfriars not yet begun. A tour in Scotland would be a big business undertaking, and Shakespeare was a big shareholder, and is supposed to have owned the stage equipment and "props", so that he might well think his duty was to accompany his players.

For his own sake let us hope that he did accompany his players to Scotland, and regret for ourselves that he did not write more plays about it.

Amongst the many places of historic interest in Edinburgh, there is a building which will for ever commemorate our own times, and that is the War Memorial in the Castle. Until I saw

it I had tired of hearing that it was the most beautiful of all memorials, but having seen it I am confident that it is so. The splendour of its details is only surpassed in the simplicity of the whole. Every unit is given its place of honour. Of all that mighty host who gave their lives for freedom, not one is forgotten. Even the animals who were sacrificed at their duty are remembered. The pilgrim who goes there can find the shrine of any loved one lost. In its wide comprehension it is the personal shrine for all.

Leaving Edinburgh, I went in search of a headquarters from which to make various expeditions into the *Macbeth* country and decided on Loch Tay as being pleasant and convenient. This was not easy. Scotland was overcrowded with visitors attracted to the Glasgow Exhibition, who wisely included fishing and exploring in their trip. Every room was booked, and the night after leaving Edinburgh looked as though my only shelter would be in my car. Dining at St. Fillans, I put through telephone calls to every hotel on Loch Tay and Loch Earn, and found that the only available accommodation was in Crieff, a little burgh of Perthshire on the Earn River. I accordingly became, in the language of Macbeth, a lated traveller that spurs apace to gain the timely inn. It certainly was a most timely inn: small but clean, and filled with true Scotch hospitality. The proprietress was a Mrs. MacDonald, and she was certainly not like the Shakespearian Macdonwald, merciless, for she insisted that because one had dined was no reason for not eating a good supper too, and what is better than home-cured bacon, sizzling hot, with eggs, served with Scotch cakes and ale? When she learned that the Scotch blood in my veins was MacDonald, I was at home indeed. Next morning, in taking a stroll through the little streets, I discovered in an angle of the wall of an old building a set of stocks behind a rail, which gave quite a Shakespearian touch.

From Crieff, I decided to make for Aberfeldy, but wanting to see the loch shores by daylight, which had looked so promising under the moon, I fortunately went the long way round, and so discovered Kenmore, just in time for lunch at the Breadalbane Arms.

Situated at the gates of Taymouth Castle, this old inn is one of those places that travellers dream about. While at lunch (and oh, how good the trout was!) a telegram arrived cancelling someone's rooms, which I immediately booked. The view from my windows looked out upon a terrace and lawn that sloped to the

river where boats awaited one's convenience. The guests of the inn had the extensive grounds of the castle at their disposal, and how magnificent they are. The historic castle has been turned into a luxury hotel. It is there a case of the Ghost goes West. The management, however, have not destroyed the atmosphere. If one goes there for dinner or to dance one can well imagine that one is a guest of a great laird. Most of the guests are in full highland dress, and the principal dances are reels. It is still a highland castle, and not an hotel.

Of the many treasures in the castle there is one that had for me an uncanny fascination. It is a picture that hangs over a superb doorway, somewhat high up in case inquisitive fingers should touch the paint, and is by some great Italian artist.

One of the night-porters showed it to me first. He was not a bit like a night-porter: much more like a family retainer. He asked me what I made of the picture. I told him that it was the most dreadful face I had ever seen. He asked me to describe what I saw, and I said it was the face of a man encrusted with leprosy. The whiteness of the scourge had ravaged the lower part of the face, and the eyes showed with horror that they had no escape. "In fact," I said, "it is the most repulsive thing I have ever seen, though wonderfully painted."

He just nodded, and told me not to say anything else for the moment. Some little distance behind us was a young lady looking up at the monstrous picture with a rapt attention. The serenity of her gaze gave her a beauty which was very refreshing after a look at the horror over the door.

"Well, miss," asked the porter who was acting as my guide, "and what do you see now?"

"I can only see the saintly face of the old palmer," she answered.

"Saintly?" I repeated. "But you must be able to see that horrible white face."

"The only white I can see," she explained, "is the saint's long flowing beard. But what a lovely face he has."

"It's very strange, sir," said the porter, "that whatever face one first sees in that picture obliterates the other always. I've known it a long time, but, like the young lady, I can only see the face of the saint, though people tell me that there is a dreadful face there which I have never found. It's like that all the time. Some see one, and some the other. I wonder why it is."

"I expect the wicked people see the horror," I said against myself, "and the good, the good."

The polite porter did not commit himself, but looked at the young lady, who very kindly added: "But perhaps it goes by opposites, like they say of dreams."

I went back to the picture several times, but I regret to say I never saw the good face. Did the face of horror suddenly appear after the artist had completed his portrait of the saint, or did he secretly hate the saint and when making his portrait put his opinion of the sitter into his flowing beard? Never having seen the saint, I cannot say whether there is any resemblance between the two faces in this Jekyll and Hyde canvas. I was sorrier still at not seeing the saint, when the young lady, who was as anxious to see the leper, told me that the portrait she saw was her idea of what Friar Lawrence should look like in *Romeo and Juliet.*

In the inn by the castle gates I had a curious mental experience. I was sitting in the lounge which in the old days had been a kitchen-parlour, studying a map and thinking about Birnam Wood and Dunsinane. It was nearly dark, and the white walls between the oak beams were reflecting the flames of a log fire. For some reason, my mind wandered from thinking about *Macbeth* and Shakespeare to Robert Burns. I looked up, feeling that I was not alone, and yet I knew there was no one else in the lounge. In the leaping firelight, I saw, or imagined I saw, an impish-looking fellow, dressed in old-fashioned home-spun, curled up in the fire-settle. Someone had left a blue tweed jacket on the settle, which made the framework, and the light from the fire upon the oak supplied the rest; but there certainly sat a man that for a few seconds I knew for Burns. I had no idea that the poet had had anything to do with this inn or that particular part of the country. As the vision faded into the prosaic, jacket and reflections, I saw for the first time since entering the room some lines written in pencil above the chimney-piece. I got up and crossed over to the fire. I then switched on the lights. There, in very neat writing on the plaster, and protected by a sheet of glass, was a poem, and although I had never read the lines before, I am ashamed to say, I instinctively knew that it was the writing of Burns. I then saw an open book, rather battered, lying open on the oak settle beside the jacket. I picked it up. It was the *Works of Robert Burns* and open at the identical poem I had just read above the chimney-piece. In the book the poem was headed:

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE, IN THE PARLOUR OF THE INN AT KENMORE TAYMOUTH.

Admiring nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace;
O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
Th' abodes of covey'd grouse and timid sheep,
My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
The fam'd Breadalbane opens to my view.——
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
The woods, wild scattered, clothe their ample sides,
Th' outstretching lake, imbosom'd 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills;
The Tay meand'ring sweet in infant pride,
The palace rising on his verdant side;
The lawns wood-fring'd in nature's native taste;
The hillocks dropt in nature's careless haste;
The arches striding o'er the new-born stream;
The village glittering in the noontide beam——

Poetic ardours in my bosom swell,
Lone wand'ring by the hermit's mossy cell:
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods!
Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods——
Here poesy might wake her heav'n-taught lyre,
And look through nature with creative fire;
Here, to the wrongs of fate half reconcil'd,
Misfortune's lighten'd steps might wander wild;
And disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter rankling wounds:
Here heart-struck grief, might heav'nward stretch her scan,
And injur'd worth forget and pardon man.

There is something very personal in this poem written in the handwriting of the poet. Very easy writing to read, and neat. Did he write it in lieu of his board and lodging? It was well worth it to the inn if he did. I am told that many Americans and rich Canadians have offered fabulous sums to remove that chimney-piece to their homes across the seas, but let us hope that it will ever remain in Kenmore, at the old Breadalbane Arms.

It is very pleasant to sit there after a good dinner at night and to think of Bobbie Burns jumping up from the settle opposite one, to add another line or two to his poem. After a walk

in the castle park under the moon, where one has imagined meeting the White Lady in the Dark Avenue, which is a local ghost tale, then to come back tired into that pleasant little lounge, and over a nightcap to see him there still, writing his poem to the finish about those very spots that you have seen that day, is a delightful experience.

Macbeth has the quickest action of all Shakespeare's plays. Thoughts are born; action completes them almost immediately, and then the result is shown, which in turn gives birth to new thoughts, new actions and new results, and all piling up to a mighty termination. Personally I maintain that it is Shakespeare's one play that keeps its finest act for the last. In *Julius Caesar* nothing can top the Forum scene; not even the magnificent Quarrel scene; certainly not the Plains of Philippi. Shakespeare's genius in the last act of *Hamlet* is colossal, but it cannot overtop the acts that have gone before it. The same can be said of *Lear* and *Othello*; of *Romeo and Juliet* too. The last act of *Macbeth* gives to both the guilty pair their best scenes. There is no finer scene for the actress than the Sleep-walking scene. There is no finer opportunity for the actor than Macbeth meeting his end with armour on his back. The quiet passages of thought in this act for Macbeth, contrasted with the terrifying rages that dominate his spirit at the end, embrace the widest possible range for the actor's artistry, who must see to it that he has reserved sufficient strength from the arduous tasks that have gone before, to paralyse his audience in this grand finale.

The play starts with the three witches, who are the mainspring of the whole play. The scene is described as:

A DESERT HEATH.

No lines are better known or more quoted than the opening question of the First Witch:

> When shall we three meet again
> In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

The first line, so often used when three people part company, is shunned by stage folk as most unlucky, I suppose because this is the classic play of superstition and ill-omens. The locality of this desert heath is somewhere in the vicinity of Forres, which is the market town of Morayshire. It stands

on the River Findhorn, which rises in the Inverness Mountains and after some sixty miles flows into the Moray Firth. It passes through both Elgin and Nairn. Findhorn Bay is an opening of the Firth. The village of Findhorn, on the east side of the bay, is a seaside summer resort, Forres is five miles inland. The witches are planning to meet Macbeth on his return from battle upon the heath. There is a large area of heath country which extends in a southerly direction from Forres.

This first scene strikes the right note. It is weird; it is brief; indeed, part of the reason why this play appears so swift is that it is the shortest of the Shakespeare tragedies. Also the mind of reader or audience is kept strictly to the fast-moving story and never confused with sub-plots or complication. It is horror told and shown straight from the shoulder. The end of the scene like the opening is full of foreboding:

> Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
> Hover through the fog and filthy air.

The late Sir Philip Ben Greet used here a very simple but astoundingly good device for making it seem that the weird sisters were actually hovering above our heads. I commend it to all who produce the play whether they employ flying apparatus for the witches or no. As the witches go off they chant this couplet together, and it is immediately echoed by three other voices at the top of the theatre either in the "flies" above the stage or from some unseen lofty station above the auditorium. If the echoes are done in good imitation of the princpals, the effect of flying is conveyed to the audience. When Ben Greet produced the play in the Elizabethan manner, he dressed the witches in farthingales, tight bodices, and tall Welsh hats. The effect was curiously alarming.

When Matheson Lang produced the play at Shanghai during his world tour I was playing the First Witch with two of the ladies, and this scene was set right down on the footlights, in order that the Camp scene that followed could be as large as possible. Only our three faces were seen, and in order to give the effect of hovering in mid-air, we were placed on a very tall rostrum. There was storm-music played all through our lines, so that the orchestra lights had to be on. Though the rostrum was quite safe, the rake of the stage tilted it forward, which gave one the impression that it was *not* safe. The depth of the orchestra well made us feel twice as high directly the

curtain rose. To add to the usual terrors of a first night, we were all three seized with the most dreadful giddiness. The two ladies clung to my arms, and gradually sank to their knees, but manfully wobbling up to speak their lines, and then disappearing again into the darkness, for the men on the perches were Chinese, and although wonderfully efficient, could only work from plots in their own language. It was no use trying to tell them to alter anything on the spur of the moment. Although I was as giddy as the ladies, and expected every minute to topple forward upon the conductor's head far below, I had the advantage of being in the the middle of the rostrum. The bobbing up and down of the others, however, was pronounced from the front to be so effective that it stayed in, so that our torture of giddiness continued, and the most we could do was to thank Shakespeare for having kept the scene so short. Like Edgar in *Lear*, we experienced "*how fearful and dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low*". We were less than "*a foot of the extreme verge*", and felt that for *all beneath the moon*, even double salaries, *would we not leap upright.*

The next scene is titled:

A CAMP NEAR FORRES.

In all probability King Duncan's camp would have been pitched on the moors to the south of the old historic town of Forres. Strategically this would intercept the invaders from Fife on their way to attack the royal castle of Forres. The vast tracts of heath here are almost level, and the invading army could be seen at a great distance.

In this scene King Duncan questions a bleeding sergeant about the battle and learns of the bravery shown by Macbeth. The worthy Thane of Ross confirms the news of the Norweyan King's defeat, who was assisted by the treacherous Thane of Cawdor, whose death is pronounced by the King, and his title given to Macbeth. Ross is sent to greet Macbeth.

It was in this scene that I once had the horrible experience of meeting myself on the stage. It was during one of Ben Greet's American tours many years ago. I was playing no less than ten parts, besides being responsible for the wind machine and noises off, such as cries of women. Just before ringing up, the juvenile playing Malcolm was taken ill and could not appear. I was told to take it on, because no one else knew it, and being assistant stage manager, I was expected to know all the plays word for word. I asked who was going to play my ten

little parts, and Ben Greet replied: "If you can manage ten, another one won't hurt you."

Well, quick changes *were* quick changes in those days, so I gaily played a witch in the first scene, underdressed for the bloody sergeant in the second. I made my staggering entrance on one side of the stage, meeting the King and his party who entered on the other. The King said his first little speech and there was a pause. Suddenly I realized that although playing the sergeant on the right of the stage, I ought also to be playing Malcolm on the left, and delivering his first speech, which goes:

> "This is the sergeant,
> Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
> 'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
> Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
> As thou didst leave it."

There was only one thing to be done. Instead of being introduced to the King by the King's son, I had to introduce myself. So I said:

> "*I* am the sergeant,
> Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
> 'Gainst thy captivity. Hail, brave friends!
> *I'll* say to the king the knowledge of the broil
> As *I* did leave it. Doubtful it stood. . . ." etc.

The point of this story, which is very much against myself, is that on meeting Ben Greet in the wings, I said: "Do you know, sir, I knew something dreadful would happen with all these parts, and it has, because I've just met myself."

Not a bit sympathetic, he just looked at me and remarked drily, "And a very good thing for any young actor to do, because then he can see how rotten he is."

Here is another story of the same scene and of the same actor-manager. Ben Greet was playing the part of Duncan during a summer tour at a matinée in some obscure theatre in the country. It was a very poor house, but in the front row of the stalls a former member of his company was sitting. This was the well-known authority on costume, Tom Heslewood, the designer. Of striking appearance, Tom Heslewood is easily recognized, and Ben Greet spotted him from the stage at once, as he was saying the opening line. "*What bloody man is that?*" he asked Malcolm, but not indicating the sergeant but Heslewood,

at whom he was pointing as he added aloud to Malcolm: "*Why, it's dear old Tommy Heslewood!*"

Yet Ben Greet never allowed his company to tamper with the text.

The next scene puts the play into full swing from the moment Macbeth enters.

A HEATH.

As near as we can judge, the locality of this heath is that of the Harmuir, and a more desolate piece of moor could not be found in Britain. The Harmuir, which is on the borders of Nairn and Elgin, is some six miles from Forres on the east and four from Nairn on the west. The high road from Forres to Nairn cuts across it. With neither tree nor shrub to bear off the weather, no wonder Macbeth himself calls it "*this blasted heath*". In one part of it is a distant fir clump, but as a whole it is a stretch of white stones, furze bushes, peat, and boggy water. To the north the distant hills of Caithness and Ross show above the sandhills fringing the sea. To the north-west the remains of a castle rise amongst trees on the estate of Brodie of Brodie.

Macbeth's first line is obviously to show that the witches' phrase, "*foul is fair*", mean merely that the weather on the heath, with its thunder, lightning, and rain, is foul, though the day of battle has been fair. He and Banquo are on their way north to Forres in order to report to their King, for Banquo's first words are "*How far is't call'd to Forres?*" He then sees the witches, whose uncanny suggestions of wickedness have already begun to take shape in his mind, though he does not yet connect his horrid image of suggestion to them. They hail him as Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, and King to be. The first title is an accomplished fact. Sinel, whom Holinshed states was Macbeth's father, is dead, and Macbeth succeeds to the title and possession of Glamis. The announcement that he is Thane of Cawdor comes as a surprise, for he has not heard yet of the King's judgement. A lot of controversy has arisen as to whether Cawdor was guilty, by reason of Macbeth alluding to him as "*a prosperous gentleman*", but surely the word *gentleman* can be taken in the sense of *nobleman*. Cawdor in Duncan's mind is a traitor. His treachery has been confessed and proved, and Duncan was a just man, for Macbeth himself gives him the highest praise for his virtues. Macbeth tactfully dismisses any possibility of his being King, which he says is just as unbelievable

as the possibility of being Cawdor, and demands them to give their reasons for their statements. He has obviously thought about becoming King, for Banquo asks him why he starts so at such fair news, as though he were afraid. He might well think that the witches can read his inner thoughts about being King, but what they mean about Cawdor puzzles him. But the witches have their own method of explaining. They know that Ross and Angus are on the way with the very news they could give him, and that hearing it in a natural way will make Macbeth have more belief in his high destiny. They vanish.

I submit here to producers of the play another device used by Ben Greet. When Banquo says, "*Whither are they vanished?*" the voices of the echoing witches in the roof of the theatre wail out a distant "*Hail! Hail! Hail!*" and as the sound fades away in the wind, Macbeth, looking up, says, "*Into the air.*" This makes it appear as though the witches had really melted as breath into the wind. Immediately Macbeth turns to Banquo, to whom the witches have said that his children should be kings though he would not be. It seems as though, lonely in his evil thoughts, he wanted the confidence of his friend and colleague. "*Your children shall be kings,*" he says to Banquo, in the tone of "And what do you think about that?" Banquo's answer is noncommittal, but has a world of suggestion at the back of it. "*You shall be king*", in the tone of "And what do *you* think about that?" "*And Thane of Cawdor too; went it not so?*" replies Macbeth, in the tone of "The whole thing is ridiculous, because there is no chance of my becoming Thane of Cawdor."

Then Ross and Angus arrive from the King, and Macbeth hears that he has been created Thane of Cawdor. In the passages that follow it is obvious that Macbeth has already thought of murder as a means of bringing him to the throne, but he still hopes that the fates who have given him Cawdor without having to stir in the matter himself may also do the same for him in respect of the crown. He would rather gain his honours by outside circumstances than by obeying the promptings of murder for which he would have to take full responsibility. The scene ends with Macbeth asking for a secret talk with Banquo in the future, when they have had time to think over this business of the witches. His own mind is saying that what will come, will come. They then journey on towards the King.

This scene was suggested to Shakespeare through the following passage from Holinshed:

It fortuned as Macbeth and Banquo journeyed towards Forres, where the king then lay, they went sporting by the way together, without other company save only themselves, passing through the woods and fields, when suddenly, in the midsy of a laund [a clearing or plain amongst trees], there met them three women in strange and wild apparel, resembling creatures of elder world, whom when they attentively beheld, wondering much at the sight, the first of them spake and said: All hail, Macbeth, thane of Glamis! (for he had lately entered into that dignity and office by the death of his father Sinell). The second of them said: Hail, Macbeth, thane of Cawdor! But the third said: All hail, Macbeth, that hereafter shalt be king of Scotland! Then Banquo: What manner of women (saith he) are you, that seem so little favourable unto me, whereas to my fellow here besides high offices, ye assign also the kingdom, appointing forth nothing for me at all? Yes (saith the first of them), we promise greater benefits unto thee than unto him, for he shall reign indeed, but with an unlucky end; neither shall he leave any issue behind him to succeed in his place, where contrarily thou indeed shalt not reign at all; but of thee shall be born which shall govern the Scottish kingdom by long order of continual descent. Herewith the foresaid women vanished immediately out of their sight. This was reputed at the first but some vain fantastical illusion by Macbeth and Banquo, insomuch that Banquo would call Macbeth in jest King of Scotland; and Macbeth again would call him in sport likewise the father of many kings. But afterwards the common opinion was, that these women were either the weird sisters, that is (as ye would say) the goddesses of destiny or else some nymphs or fairies, endued with knowledge of prophecy by their necromantical science, because everything came to pass as they had spoken. For, shortly after, the Thane of Cawdor being condemned at Forres of treason against the king committed, his lands, livings, and offices were given of the king's liberality to Macbeth. The same night after, at supper, Banquo jested with him, and said: Now, Macbeth, thou hast obtained those things which the two former sisters prophesied, there remaineth only for thee to purchase that which the third said should come to pass. Whereupon Macbeth, revolving the thing in his mind, began even then to devise how he might attain to the kingdom; but yet he thought with himself that he must tarry a time, which should advance him thereto (by the Divine Providence) as it had come to pass in his former preferment. But shortly after it chanced that King Duncan, having two sons by his wife, which was the daughter of Siward Earl of Northumberland, he made the elder of them, called Malcolm, Prince of Cumberland, as it were thereby to appoint him his successor in the kingdom immediately after his decease. Macbeth, sore troubled herewith, for that he saw by this means his hope sore hindered (where, by the old laws of the realm, the ordinance was, that, if he that should succeed were not of able

age to take the charge upon himself, he that was next of blood unto him should be admitted), he began to take counsel how he might usurp the kingdom by force, having a just quarrel so to do (as he took the matter), for that Duncan did what in him lay to defraud him of all manner of title and claim which he might in time to come pretend unto the crown.

The words of the three weird sisters also (of whom before ye have heard) greatly encouraged him hereunto, but specially his wife lay sore upon him to attempt the thing, as she that was very ambitious burning in unquenchable desire to bear the name of a queen. At length, therefore, communicating his purposed intent with his trusty friends, amongst whom Banquo was the chiefest, upon confidence of their promised aid he slew the king at Enverns, or (as some say) at Botgosvane, in the first year of his reign. Then, having a company about him of such as he had made privy to his enterprise, he caused himself to be proclaimed king, and forthwith went unto Scone, where (by common content) he received the investure of the kingdom according to the accustomed manner.

Shakespeare used just what he thought was the best for dramatic purposes in Holinshed, but added certain facts that really belong to the history of King Duffe's murder. There is no doubt, however, that the genius of Shakespeare will for ever outride the bare facts of history and be first in people's remembrance.

The next scene is:

FORRES. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This spot was made by Nature for a town and place of defence. It commands the Findhorn River and the flat country as far as the Moray Firth. On an eminence at the west side of the town there are remains of an old Saxon castle. What is left of the walls is massive, and tradition has it that within them resided Duncan, and that after his death Macbeth lived there and kept his court when state business demanded his presence in Forres. On the green mound of this eminence Macbeth is supposed to have bent the knee to Duncan in this scene of Shakespeare's play, which is the occasion when Duncan announces Malcolm as his successor. Between this scene and the meeting of Macbeth with the witches Macbeth has written the letter to his wife which she reads out in the next scene. Macbeth, on hearing that Malcolm is made Prince of Cumberland, seems to make up his mind to the murder of the King, though many times he wavers before actually committing the deed. As far as Shakespeare is concerned, there is no doubt as to where the murder of the King

took place. There are four or five castles that lay claim to be the murder scene. Glamis and Cawdor are the principal claimants against Inverness, but since this history is almost fable, let us stick to what we know in Shakespeare, and he says very definitely in the mouth of Duncan, addressing Macbeth, "*From hence to Inverness, and bind us further to you.*" There is no dispute in this. The scene to which we go is Inverness, and in order to get there before the King, Macbeth takes upon himself to be the messenger to his wife with the tidings of the King's approach.

All through the play it is stressed that Duncan was a good man and a just and virtuous King. That he goes out of his way on Macbeth's exit to say how he values him only adds to the horror of his murder later. And Macbeth spurs ahead of the royal guest in order to talk over with his wife the possibilities of this great visit.

INVERNESS. A ROOM IN MACBETH'S CASTLE.

Before Macbeth goes to Scone to be invested later in this play he has to do with three titles. First as Macbeth he has possession of Inverness Castle. Then Glamis and then Cawdor. All these are amongst others in claiming the murder of Duncan to have happened within their walls since Macbeth owned all three places. Inverness, which he owned before the other two, is now the capital of the Highlands, and market town of Inverness-shire. It stands on the north side of the Ness River which falls into the Moray Firth close to it. Macbeth's castle stood on the high ground overhanging the River Ness. It commanded a splendid view of the town whose buildings cluster beneath it, of the level grounds surrounding it, and of the mountains which guard Loch Ness.

Malcolm, the son of Duncan, razed the castle to the ground and built a new one near the spot and on the same hill, and Knight points out that it was this castle, dismantled during the "45", which was visited by Dr. Johnson two years before without any suspicion that this was not the identical place in which Duncan was received and entertained by Lady Macbeth. Boswell not only recognizes the "*pleasant seat*" of the building, but looks up with veneration to the battlements on which the raven croaked. He then declares: "*I had a romantic satisfaction in seeing Dr. Johnson actually in it.*" Well, and why not, Mr. Knight? It was the same spot, if not the same building, and why shouldn't Boswell get a thrill out of it? Antiquaries say that castles in Macbeth's day were not built of stone and mortar.

They were supposed to be made of timber and sods. But why shouldn't they have built with stone? There was plenty to be had for the taking. There is one spot at Inverness Castle which is allowed to speak to us of ancient days, and that is the well. The wall surrounding it is modern, and so are the iron bars to prevent you from falling into it, but the water-supply far below is the same as supplied the ancient castle. All the way up from Loch Tay I had longed to reach this place. Even the wonder of the glorious Killiecrankie and its two-mile pass could not put Inverness out of my head. What a lovely piece of country, though, is Killiecrankie! So long as one has some Highland blood in one's veins one doesn't mind the fact of the English defeat there in July 1689, and one is only sorry that Dundee was killed in the action. Then on through Blair Atholl with its well-kept park and castle, the seat of the Duke of Atholl; on through Dalnarcardoch, Dalwhinnie, Newtonmore, Carrbridge, Moy, and so to Inverness just in time for lunch on a Sunday, where a motherly Scotch waitress had much to say in a vague way about the local history. The castle? Oh yes. Very impressive castle. Newly built, of course, and used today with its courts of law. No ramshackle old ruins about it. Beautiful offices for police-men. Inverness seemed to be proud of its castle. Not a vestige of the castle in which Duncan was murdered, but the same spot, she assured me. Oh yes, Macbeth lived there with Lady Macbeth. "And you'll see the beautiful statue of the blessed woman yourself," she added. I thought "blessed woman" was a strange description of Lady Macbeth, but I was glad that, in spite of the new castle with its police offices, the authorities had remembered Shakespeare's play, so that pilgrims would have something to remind them of the play's genius. Mounting the castle rise, I saw the figure she had spoken of standing out boldly against the background of the embattled walls. A heroic figure; strong and purposeful. Her flowing classic robes; her bare arm raised with hand shading her eyes as though looking into the far distance for a sight of her returning Thane, and a hound at her side. Behind her two cannon of a later date added to the warlike note of the figure. I approached, full of admiration for the courage of the sculptor who had fashioned around this wicked woman her chief virtue, courage. No wonder the waitress had called her the "*blessed woman*"! A Joan of Arc, a Boadicea, a Grace Darling, and a Flora Macdonald. What she did, however deplorable, was at least committed for the man whose destiny she had pledged herself to

help. Flora Macdonald might have gone to the same lengths for the Prince in whom she believed. And *Flora Macdonald it was.* She was the "blessed woman" after all. The statue had been raised to her. She was dominating the castle of the Macbeths. I am afraid I was bitterly disappointed. I felt sorrier for Lady Macbeth than any actress has ever made me feel for her in the Sleep-walking scene, and I was sorry that I had praised the broadminded imagination of the authorities. The castle itself strikes one as being a fraud, because one had hoped for so much more. It was shut, being Sunday, but a pleasant-looking policeman's wife, unlocking a back door, told me that the water of the well into which I was looking was the same water drunk by King Duncan on the night of his murder. One knows at least that the grooms attending him had something stronger than well-water for their possets. Lady Macbeth had not neglected the bottle either, though she seemed to have a head for it, since what had made the King's party drunk had merely made her bold. Macbeth had obviously had enough too, for his wife had evidently told him that he could not have his "final" till the deed was done. "*Bid thy mistress when my drink is ready, she strike upon the bell.*" And when he hears it he accepts it as a signal of invitation to murder. A case of *no murder, no drink.*

Boswell was perfectly right in one thing, even though he made a mistake in his castle, for Inverness Castle today, in spite of all, is still a pleasant seat and the air of the Highlands "*nimbly and sweetly recommends itself unto our gentle senses*".

The heaven's breath still *smells wooingly here*, even though the *jutties, friezes, buttresses and coigns of vantage* are not so ancient as we would wish.

The next castle connected with the witches' hailings in company with Inverness is Glamis. The frightening notoriety of its grim legends is softened for us today by the thought that this beautiful castle is the home of our Queen Elizabeth. But its grim history in the past cannot make claim to having been the scene of Duncan's murder. Certainly not in Shakespeare's play. The village possesses an old carved cross associated with King Malcolm. In the county of Angus, it stands about six miles from Forfar, and is the seat of the Earl of Strathmore. Although in main it is a seventeenth-century building, there are the remains of a much older castle within its walls. It is within range of the Dunsinane hills, and Birnam, of which we shall say more later. The Strathmore family have held it since 1372, and before that time it was much smaller, being then only two stories high,

whereas now it rises to a hundred feet. Its ghost stories make good tales for a winter's fire, but, as I have said, we think of it now more as the beloved Highland home of our Queen.

CAWDOR CASTLE is also rich in tradition. About six miles from Nairn, the county town, it is built on the rising ground overlooking vast woodland and bound on the north by the Moray Firth. The parts of it which are of uncertain date show at least the stamp of very great antiquity. It is furnished with moat and drawbridge and its modern part is dated 1510. There is a fine old legend clinging to it, which tells how the original builder of the castle was destined to load up an ass with the chest full of gold which he had amassed for the cost of the building, and to journey on until of his freewill the animal should stop, on which spot the castle should be erected. To make things difficult, the obstinate animal stopped at a certain hawthorn in the wood, and this tree was enclosed by the builder into the centre chamber of the ground floor. Worn and cut away, this slender pillar adorns the ancient room. Beside it the chest which contained the money was left, and it was claimed that in this apartment the royal servants revelled with the Macbeth retainers on the night of the murder. However much the visitor may regret this error, some of us like to think that Shakespeare was right in placing the murder in the castle of Inverness.

Our first scene in Inverness Castle is famous, and known as the Letter Scene. It is a magnificent opening for Lady Macbeth. She has read the letter perhaps before, as many actresses like to convey. Certainly she has made up her mind about it. Her first task she knows well will be to persuade her husband into acting highly, but not holily, and with her brave tongue whip away all hindrance from her husband attaining the crown. Her next task would have been to find a suitable occasion for the assassination, but surely the weird sisters are at work, and send in an attendant who announces that the King comes here tonight. She learns that even Macbeth, whose great love, "*sharp as his spur*", makes him ride well, has yet been outraced by the messenger who is so breathless that he can hardly speak. She gives immediate orders that this messenger of great news shall be tended, and as the attendant goes off to obey her orders she hears the hoarse croaking of a raven perched upon the battlements. She thinks now more of stirring up her own courage than that of her husband. She must do it herself, now that the fates have allowed opportunity to knock upon the castle door. She talks of her own keen knife making the wound, and prays

for thick night to envelop her so that heaven shall not peep at her deed and cry "Hold! Hold!" Her husband entering to the salutation of the witches from his wife's lips, all he is asked to do is to look innocent and to leave the job to her. To his temporizing, "*We will speak further,*" she asks him again *only to look up clear*, and not to let his fear alter his expression of outward goodwill and loyalty towards the King. She is prepared to do all the dirty work. He has only to put this night's great business into her despatch, which will give to them for the rest of their lives the sovereign sway and masterdom over Scotland. "*Leave all the rest to me.*"

INVERNESS. BEFORE THE CASTLE.

This next scene shows Lady Macbeth as good as her word. It is she who goes out to welcome the King upon the ramparts. Macbeth, it seems, cannot bring himself to face his King so soon after what his wife planned and told him. It would have been a good lesson to him had he listened to his wife *beguiling the time*, by looking like it. He should have seen her bearing welcome in her eye, her hand and tongue. Here *was* the innocent flower with the serpent beneath it. True, Macbeth had the excuse of a hard dusty ride. Flecked with mud, he had only to say that he was not in a fit state to meet the King in his own castle till he had had a wash and brush-up. Nothing daunted, however, Lady Macbeth fills the gap, which his disinclination had made, and the next we see of Macbeth is in the opening of the next scene, known as the Supper Scene, in distinguishing it in stage parlance from the Banquet Scene after Macbeth is King.

INVERNESS. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

This is the anteroom to the great Hall where the supper is in progress. Macbeth steals out of the Hall to tell himself that the situation is impossible and that he cannot go on with his wife's plot. But he has to reckon with her in that matter. She soon whips up his fading courage, till he in turn gives her the advice which she has given to me, telling her to *mock the time with fairest show*. This time Macbeth lets us see that he will be more afraid of failing his wife than of the deed itself. We then go to Act II.

INVERNESS. COURT WITHIN THE CASTLE.

Shakespeare prepares this great scene with all his genius for stagecraft. Banquo going with Fleance and a torch-bearer to

their own apartments, having wished the King good night. The moon goes down, and the hour is midnight. Macbeth waiting and listening is challenged by Banquo, astounded to find him still about. On hearing that Banquo has dreamed the night before of the weird sisters, Macbeth for the second time asks him for a time to discuss that matter, but going further than on the other occasion, by telling him that if their ideas were the same way of thinking, it would mean great honour for Banquo. But all Macbeth learns from this piece of sounding is to find that his colleague is firm in honour for the King. This eventually seals Banquo's fate, and Macbeth dismisses him to his bed just as later he dismisses him from this world. Macbeth then dismisses his own servant, who would be the Seyton of the rest of the play; a servant devoted to his master in spite of everything. It was not the keen knife of his wife that did the murder. She carried out all her plan but that final effort. About to do it, the good Duncan asleep reminded her of her own father as he slept, and some womanly feeling stirring in her forbade her to go further. But she had prepared the stage for her husband. She had laid the daggers of the grooms ready for his use. She had drugged their drink and lured them into an unnatural sleep. Macbeth, armed with his own dagger in case of accident, creeps off to do the deed. This scene is too well known to dwell on. It stands for MURDER in its worst sense for all time, accompanied by the fitting scream of an owl and crickets' cries, and then when the guilty pair are on the verge of hysteria, Lady Macbeth, who has been listening while the murder was committed, notices that her husband has not replaced the bloody daggers of the grooms, and she urges him to put them back in their place, and to smear the faces of the sleeping guards with the King's blood. But this Macbeth is not able to do, and it falls to this resolute woman to do it for him. It is then that perhaps the worst effect in murder arises. The KNOCKING upon the door.

The noise appals Macbeth, but the sight of the blood upon his hands appals him more. He suffers the same emotion here as Lady Macbeth suffers later in the Sleep-walking scene. Nothing can wash the blood from either of those pairs of hands, and they both know it. But to Lady Macbeth, fighting for her husband now, it only requires a little water. She keeps her head when he has lost his. She thinks of everything. They must change into their night-gear. It must not appear that they have been awake, and she drags him to their room.

What other dramatist would then have switched into low

comedy? Shakespeare, who has so much Grand Guignol to follow, realizes that the audience must be recovered by this tremendous piece of contrast. It is masterly. It is what we call good theatre. And how quickly he drags us back to the horror. Macduff and Lenox enter and are confronted by Macbeth in his dressing-gown. Macduff had had orders to attend the King early, and Macbeth, saying that he will bring the Thane of Fife to the royal apartment, cannot enter, but indicates the door, which Macduff enters. While Macbeth screws up his courage to meet the situation which will immediately arise, Lenox chats to him of the wild night through which they have passed. Then comes the climax. The horror, horror, horror of Macduff. The quick dash of Macbeth and Lenox to the death-chamber. The ringing of the alarum bell, and the castle violently awakened. Now it is that Macbeth keeps his head, though seeming to lose it. Now it is that Lady Macbeth becomes weak by almost giving away her guilty secret by her cry of "*What, in our house?*" showing that she thinks of herself more than the actual calamity. It is a feeble attempt to put people off the scent. It is tantamount to saying, "*Whatever will people think of us? If only it hadn't happened while the King was in our charge!*"

Like the old story of the wife whose husband was hiding from the officers of the law up the chimney, and in order to keep him safe cried out, "He's not up the chimney." Quickly suspicious, Banquo, remembering Macbeth's sounding, retorts with, "*Too cruel, anywhere.*" Macbeth himself puts up a better show. He is now the man of action. He realizes that he must rely now upon himself. He has no compunction about killing the innocent grooms, but makes a brave show of repenting the hasty fury which made him do so. He describes the scene of the crime in lurid detail to the sons of the murdered King. He organizes the horrified company to put on manly readiness and to meet in the Hall together. Lady Macbeth has crumpled.

But the two sons decide to fly while they can. They know their own lives are in danger. Malcolm turns to England. Donalbain to Ireland.

INVERNESS. WITHOUT THE CASTLE.

This little scene is rarely played on the stage nowadays, because it is an anti-climax for the end of an act. Indeed, most producers, unless adhering to the strict Elizabethan method, end the act in the scene previous, by joining the two passages of dialogue between the King's sons, and finishing with Macbeth's

exhortation to meet in the Hall, so that the curtain can fall to the general shout of, "Well contented." And yet this little scene is a rounding-up of the murder. We hear how the sun refuses to shine and turns day into night. We hear how an owl hawk'd at a falcon and killed it, and how Duncan's horses turned wild and ate each other. Macduff enters and tells Ross that by flying the country the King's sons have had suspicion fastened on them for the murder of their father. He goes on to say that Macbeth has been elected King and has gone to Scone to be invested, while Duncan's body has been carried to Colmes-kill to be interred with the former remains of royal kings. Macduff goes to Fife while Ross goes to attend the new King at Scone. I can only hope for his sake that the Thane of Ross had better luck in getting admitted to Royal Scone than I did. Of course, when ancient royal or historic buildings are privately owned, the owner has the right to do with the property as he pleases. But I honestly think that were I able to purchase the Tower of London, or Windsor Castle, tomorrow, I would at least allow people interested to look at the place from the near outside if it were impossible to let them in. The palace of Scone, unlike most British castles, is entirely hidden except from a view from the farther side of the River Tay. Even then you see little else but trees and a suggestion of what might be a great house. I got to the little village, and found the lodge gates. I could have gate-crashed, but didn't. Perhaps I had not the courage. But I knocked upon the lodge door and was confronted with a Scots lady who went out of her way to explain to me how utterly impossible it was for me to tread upon the drive gravel since the family were expected back the next day. She was so sincere that I saw that it really would be barbarous of me to do any such thing. I asked if it were permissible for me to tiptoe down the wheelmarks of the drive. She pointed out that it would be outrageous. Again she was so sincere that I agreed it *would* be outrageous. Had I told her that I was a rich though forgotten relative of the family who had only come to Scone in order to drop a cheque from estates in Australia to augment the affairs of the family, she would have directed me to the local post-office and told me to post it. But would she have let me go down that drive? NO.

This ancient royal Scone is supposed to have been the capital of Pictavia. It lies two miles north of Perth. It was the residence of monarchs as far back as the reign of Kenneth McAlpin. A long line of kings was crowned upon the famous stone now

enclosed in the seat of the throne in Westminster Abbey. It had come to Scone from an earlier seat of Scottish kings called Dunstaffnage. King Kenneth II brought it to Scone. It was Edward I, known as the Hammer of the Scots, who brought it to Westminster Abbey in 1296. The tradition of the stone is that it was the pillow which Jacob rested his head on when he dreamed his dream of the ladder reaching to heaven. It is also legendary that this remarkable stone found its own way from Luz, the plain where the dream was dreamed, till it rested at Dunstaffnage.

COLMES-KILL, or in plainer language ST. COLUMBA'S CELL, is on the island of Iona. It must not be confused with the ST. COLMES'INCH of this play which is the ST. COLUMBA'S ISLAND and lies in the Firth of Forth, off the coast of Fife. Columba was an Irish saint who was born in Donegal in 521. After becoming a monk he settled in Iona and sent out from there missionaries to convert Scotland and the north of England to Christianity. It is said that upon St. Columba's Island, Alexander the First was wrecked. This Alexander was Bishop of Rome in 107 and was Pope for the following nine years. On being wrecked he was entertained by a hermit, and because of his salvation from the wreck, and in return also for the hermit's actions of charity, he founded a monastery, the remains of which can still be seen. It was often raided by English pirates, on whom the Saint always got revenge, so that for centuries it became a place of great sanctity. It was used for great conferences, as oaths taken there were very binding. It was here that Sweno, the Norweyan King of this play, was forced to cough up his ten thousand dollars before being allowed to bury his dead on the battlefield in Fife. But if this island of Columba was the place of business in high circles, why, Iona, Columba's Island, and the place of his cell, was the place of burial in the highest circles. A narrow channel separates it from the larger island of Mull, off the west coast of Argyle. Not only were kings of Scotland laid to rest here, but also Irish and Norwegian kings, as many legends and traditions state. It seems absurd that this island of three miles by one and a half should once have been the most important spot in the whole group of the British Isles. Yet so it was. It was inhabited by Druids previous to the coming of St. Columba, who first rejoiced in the name of Colum M'Felim M'Fergus. Columba brought twelve companions with him to teach and to preach. They speedily erected their monastery, and later others sprang up under his guidance not only upon neighbouring isles but upon

the mainland. The old part of a cathedral and an adjacent nunnery can still be traced. The learning and discipline of Iona spread throughout the whole Christian world. It had a great reputation for piety. Its missionaries were reverenced, so that the highest in the lands sought out Iona and strove to be admitted to its régime. Here were kept the royal records of events, and the bones of many kings were cared for with religious zeal. The monarchs, from Kenneth III in 973 to Macbeth himself in 1040, were buried at Iona. Some historians state that the cathedral was a place built for royal burials from the time of its first erection. Like the other Columba's Island, it was often raided by pirates. This caused many of the most valuable records to be sent over to Ireland for safe keeping. The monastic establishment thrived till the Act of the Convention of Estates of 1651 doomed it to demolition. All books then to be found in Iona were burned. The tombs were broken open and their contents scattered, while the ancient crosses were overthrown or else carried away. The ancient tombs that are left cannot definitely be named. You cannot say, "There lies Macbeth, just there; and there Duncan." But you can say definitely that they lie somewhere in that holy place. Some of the kings from Norway and Ireland who are buried here journeyed to this sacred isle in pilgrimage and abdicated their thrones in order to retire into the life of such Christian peace. Royal corpses from Scotland bound for that resting-place were embarked at Corpach, two miles from Fort William, and taken down Loch Linnhe. Oh, how patiently I waited at Fort William for a sight of the summit of Ben Nevis! I kept being told that I should most likely see it on the morrow, till a very honest Scot told me that it was a way the people had there not to wish to disappoint folk, but that, knowing the mountain and its way more than most, he could safely promise that I should get no view of it for six weeks at least. I was unable to stay for six weeks. I never saw the summit of Ben Nevis. But I think the ways up into mist was one of the most majestic sights I ever saw. Ben Nevis was playing at being Everest all the time I was there.

FORRES. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This act is given up to the murder of Banquo, and its results upon Macbeth. Shakespeare goes to Holinshed for facts, which he keeps to in the main, only making such minor changes for the improvement of dramatic sequence. For instance, he has Banquo murdered on his way to the Banquet and not after it, so that the

ghost can appear in the empty chair, reserved for him when living. Holinshed gives it:

> These and the like commendable laws Macbeth caused to be put as then in use, governing the realm for the space of ten years in equal justice. But this was but a counterfeit zeal of equity showed by him, partly against his natural inclination, to purchase thereby the favour of the people. Shortly after, he began to show what he was, instead of equity, practising cruelty. For the prick of conscience (as it chanceth ever in tyrants, and such as attain to any estate by unrighteous means), caused him ever to fear lest he should be served of the same cup as he had ministered to his predecessor. The words also of the three weird sisters would not out of his mind, which, as they promised him the kingdom, so likewise did they promise it at the same time unto the proterity of Banquo. He willed therefore the same Banquo, with his son, named Fleance, to come to a supper that he had prepared for them, which was indeed, as he had devised, present death at the hands of certain murderers whom he hired to execute that deed, appointing them to meet with the same Banquo and his son without the palace as they returned to their lodgings, and there to slay them, so that he would not have his house slandered, but that in time to come he might clear himself if anything were laid to his charge upon any suspicion that might arise.
>
> It chanced yet by the benefit of the dark night that, though the father were slain, the son, yet by the help of Almighty God, reserving him to better fortune, escaped that danger: and afterwards having some inkling (by the admonition of some friends which he had in the court) how his life was sought no less than his father's, who was slain not by chance-medley (as by the handling of the matter Macbeth would have had it appear), but even upon a devise; whereupon to avoid further peril, he fled into Wales.

At the start of the scene Banquo is wondering whether the words of the three weird sisters, so true for Macbeth, will be fulfilled to him. We know that Banquo suspects Macbeth of foul play, though on his entrance as King he is dutifully polite. Macbeth, knowing that Banquo is going riding, makes a great show of urging him not to miss the Banquet. He wants to impress the other lords that Banquo is to be his chief guest, at the same time making a point of stressing his desire for Banquo's good advice as a counsellor. He also stresses the fact that Malcolm and Donalbain are fled to England and Ireland respectively, where, instead of confessing their cruel parricide, they are inventing strange things. What they have said is of course the truth, namely that their royal father was murdered by Macbeth. Macbeth

reading in Banquo's silence that agreement with the late King's sons, quickly changes the subject to an almost jovial farewell. He then dismisses the Court and sends for the murderers, telling himself that while Banquo and Fleance are alive, the witches' prophecy may come true for them, as it has done for him, in which case all the horror he had gone through, and was going through with thoughts and dreams, would serve Banquo's family more than his own.

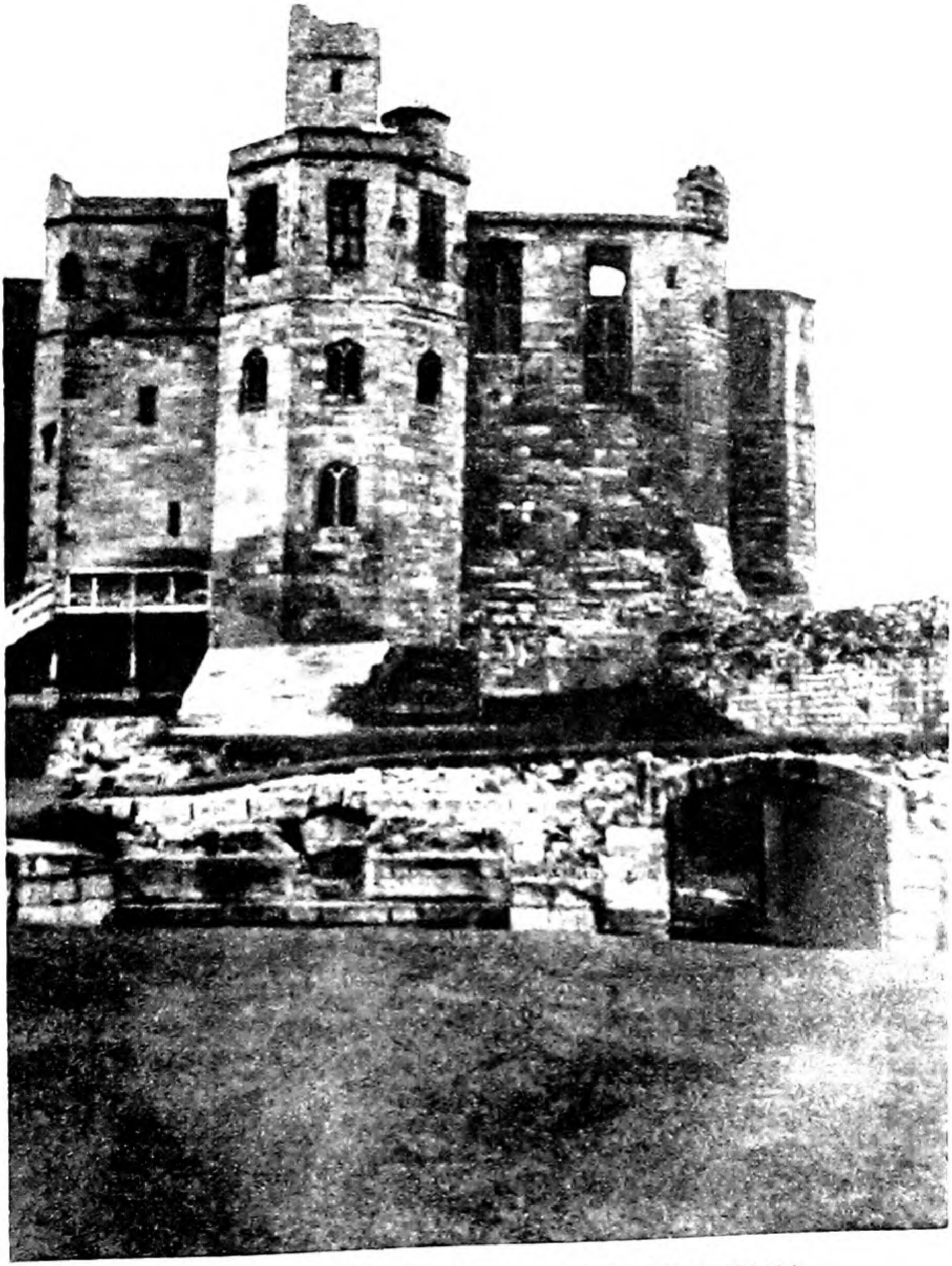
I have already spoken of *Macbeth* being looked upon as an unlucky play by stage-folk. Many years ago I certainly received a great shock in this very scene. I was touring *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*. At a certain town an old friend of my family asked me if I could cure a son of his who had just left school of stage fever. He maintained that his son would never succeed as an actor, but was very keen to try his hand. It was finally arranged that he should be given a trial, and I squeezed him into the company for the Second Murderer and Balthasar, Romeo's young page. At least it was a chance to show versatility. His clothes were given to him, and he shared a room with the stage-manager, who was playing First Murderer, and was in consequence always on the stage. Summoned hastily by the call-boy, the young man was just able to get on to the stage in time, following his colleague in crime. Sitting on the throne as Macbeth, I saw to my horror that the Second Murderer was Balthasar, dressed in all the effeminate finery of that play, with a Romeo cap and feather, and beautiful silks and velvets. It was, to say the least, an incongruous performance, especially when delivering the lines:

> And I another,
> So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
> That I would set my life on any chance,
> To mend it, or be rid on't.

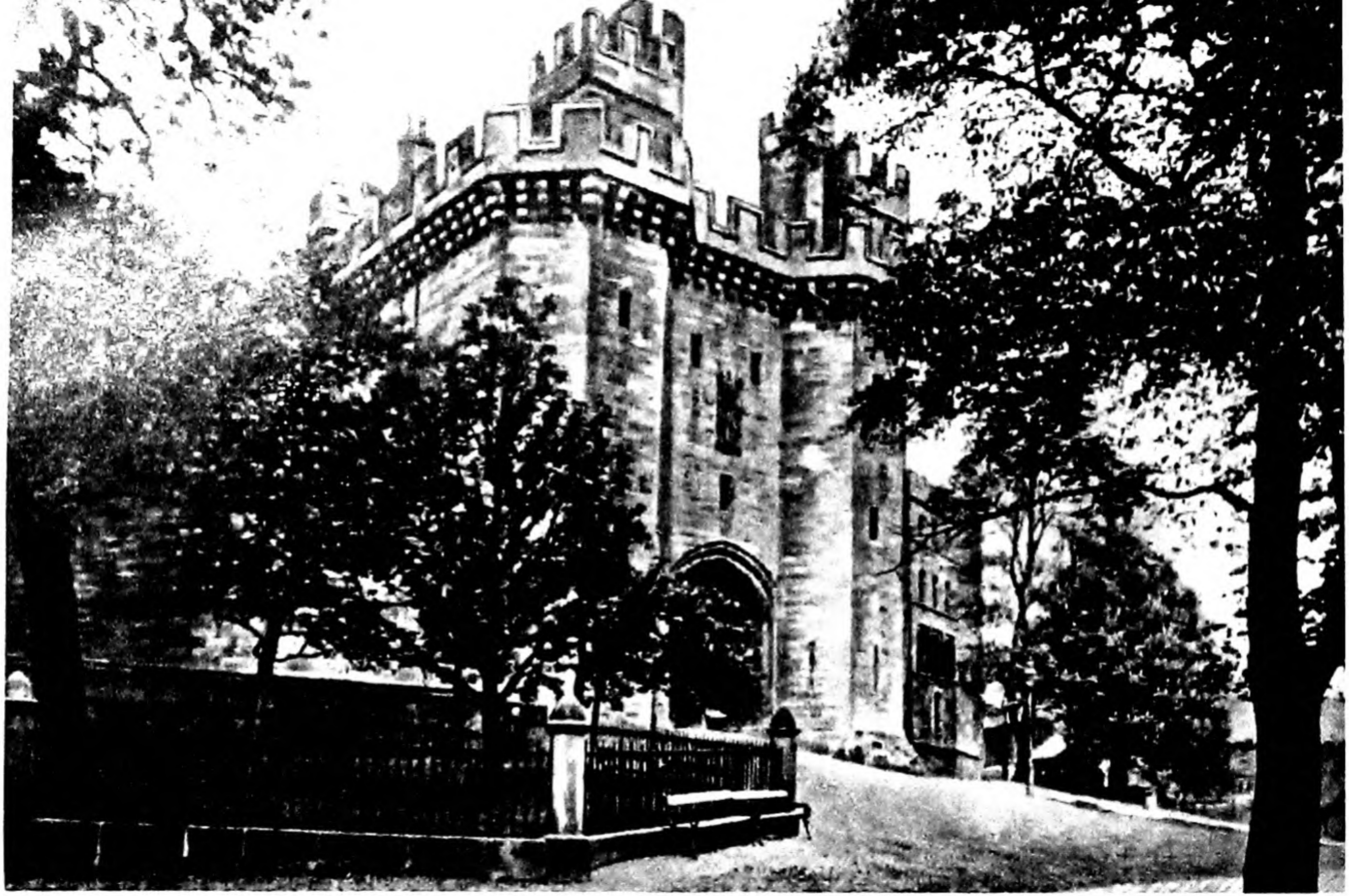
He never recovered from making up for the wrong play, but has since done well in another branch of life.

FORRES. ANOTHER ROOM IN THE PALACE.

For word-painting there is nothing in all Shakespeare to better passages here. The day thickening into night: the crow making wing to the rooky wood: the bat's *cloister'd flight*: *the shard-borne beetle* described *with his drowsy hums*, as though Shakespeare is compelling his audience to visualize night by the sound



WARKWORTH THE GRIM FORTRESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND



LANCASTER—THE CASTLE GATEWAY

of words. And on the top of this preparation, the next scene with the murder.

FORRES. A PARK WITH A GATE LEADING TO THE PALACE.

Shakespeare cleverly gets over the difficulty of the horses by making Banquo and Fleance dismount and take a short cut across the palace lawns. Some editors give the word *Lawn* in the stage direction. The presence of the Third Murderer has called for much comment. The theory brought forward by some that it was Macbeth himself is, I am sure, untenable. The interview with the two murderers in the next scene gives the lie to it. I always think that the part should be played by Seyton, the confidential servant. He could have gleaned from the stable-boys which way Banquo would return, and so inform the others. He is the one who has all the information and the criticism. When asked who told him to join them, he replies "*Macbeth*," and it is he who first hears the horses, and explains that the horses are going about, or round by the road, almost a mile longer than this short cut to the Palace. On Banquo's entrance he recognizes him, and after the assault demands who struck out the light, then declaring that they have only stabbed Banquo and the son has escaped.

FORRES. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE PALACE.

This would be the great Hall in the Castle set out for a State Banquet. Lady Macbeth keeps her state: that is, she is seated in a throne or chair of state somewhat apart from the guests, some of whom may be standing round her. Macbeth, on the other hand, is moving vigorously about amongst his Court, and no doubt keeping an anxious look-out for the First Murderer to show himself at some side door to report. In the previous scene it was the First Murderer who was anxious to get away from the scene of the crime and say how much had been done. If the Third Murderer was Seyton, he would, I think, avoid his master till the news had been broken about the escape of Fleance. He would fear too wild an outbreak from Macbeth, and would be wise to let another brave the storm. Had Shakespeare meant Ross to be the Third Murderer, as Libby argues so strongly, I am confident he would have said so, and the play is too straightforward and quick-moving for such subtleties in a more or less obscure character. If Ross had been meant to be an attendant Iago upon Macbeth, Shakespeare would have made this quite clear. And now we come to one of the greatest controversies

that are argued in this play, and that concerns the Ghost of Banquo. One of the contentions is that the Ghost of Banquo should not be seen by the audience, since it is only Macbeth who sees him in the play. Yet the stage direction in the original edition is very emphatic: ENTER THE GHOST OF BANQUO, AND SITS IN MACBETH'S PLACE. This must have been printed under first-hand knowledge, for Shakespeare himself had only been dead seven years, and it was but sixteen years since the first production of the play. Besides, Shakespeare was a popular dramatist, and knew that he had to appeal to the lovers of what can be called "*twopence coloured*" stuff. They liked to see ghosts, and not just imagine them. It is certain that the actual appearance of the ghost was Shakespeare's idea of how it should be done, and it is likely that Banquo's sudden appearances and disappearances were made effective by the actor being *masked* by processions of serving-men bringing in dishes, or clearing them away. I have seen this method in practice and it is more surprising than any tricks of lighting or Pepper's ghost effects.

Apart from the stage direction, which is very explicit, we have a record of the play dated 1610 in a manuscript possessed by the Bodleian Library. It was written by a Doctor Forman in a work entitled *Book of Plays and Notes thereof for common Policy*. The section dealing with Banquo's ghost reads as concisely as the stage direction. There is no doubt about Doctor Forman seeing the actor of Banquo enter as the Ghost. As a first description of the play it is worth giving in full.

> In Macbeth, at the Globe, 1610, the 20th of April, Saturday, there was to be observed, first, how Macbeth and Banquo, two noblemen of Scotland, riding through a wood, there stood before them three women, fairies, or nymphs, and saluted Macbeth, saying three times unto him, Hail, Macbeth, King of Coudor, for thou shalt be king, but shall beget no kings, &c. Then, said Banquo, What, all to Macbeth and nothing to me? Yes, said the nymphs, Hail to thee, Banquo; thou shalt beget kings, yet be no king. And so they departed, and came to the court of Scotland, to Duncan King of Scots, and it was in the days of Edward the Confessor. And Duncan bade them both kindly welcome, and made Macbeth forthwith Prince of Northumberland; and sent him home to his own castle, and appointed Macbeth to provide for him, for he would sup with him the next day at night, and did so.
>
> And Macbeth contrived to kill Duncan, and through the persuasion of his wife did that night murder the king in his own castle, being his guest. And there were many prodigies seen that night and the day before. And when Macbeth had murdered the king,

the blood on his hands could not be washed off by any means, nor from his wife's hands, which handled the bloody daggers in hiding them, by which means they became both much amazed and affronted.

The murder being known, Duncan's two sons fled, the one to England, the other to Wales to save themselves: they being fled were supposed guilty of the murder of their father, which was nothing so.

Then was Macbeth crowned king, and then he, for fear of Banquo, his old companion, that he should beget kings but be no king himself, he contrived the death of Banquo, and caused him to be murdered on the way that he rode. The night being at supper with his noblemen, whom he had bid to a feast (to which also Banquo should have come), he began to speak of noble Banquo, and to wish that he were there. And as he thus did, standing up to drink a carouse to him, the ghost of Banquo came and sat down in his chair behind him. And he, turning about to sit down again, saw the ghost of Banquo, which fronted him, so that he fell in a great passion of fear and fury, uttering many words about his murder, by which, when they heard that Banquo was murdered, they suspected Macbeth.

Then Macduff fled to England to the king's son, and so they raised an army and came into Scotland, and at Dunston Anyse overthrew Macbeth. In the mean time, while Macduff was in England, Macbeth slew Macduff's wife and children, and after, in the battle, Macduff slew Macbeth. Observe also, how Macbeth's queen did rise in the night in her sleep and walk, and talked and confessed all, and the doctor noted her words.

The other great contention concerning Banquo's ghost is the question as to whether Banquo's ghost makes both appearances or whether one of the appearances is not the ghost of Duncan.

Many of Macbeth's lines are quoted as pegs on which to hang this extraordinary contention. They are one and all very ingenious, but seem to me to be attempting an explanation of something which has no mystery to be solved.

First and foremost it is contended that a second appearance of the same ghost would not have driven Macbeth into a greater fear. But surely the most terrifying attribute in a ghost would be a persistency to keep popping up. On its first appearance so soon after the murder it is appalling enough, but to follow this up almost immediately would make Macbeth think that it never *would* stop this sort of thing, and that never would he be able to escape from it. But once having established a cause for argument, the question grew. If Duncan appeared, was it the first time or

the second? The claimants that he was the first base their argument upon the lines of Macbeth:

> If charnel-houses, and our graves, must send
> Those that we bury back:——

They say that Duncan being in his grave, against Banquo lying in a ditch, must refer to Duncan. But was Banquo lying *exposed* in a ditch, or was he hastily buried? Probably exposed, because being an important Lord of the Council, the exposure and recognition of his body would be demanded by the other noblemen. His rank would demand a fitting burial. But Macbeth may have been speaking figuratively. He may have been speaking of the dead as a whole, and not particularly of Banquo, or Duncan, as they would have us believe. Against these commentators are those who contend that the second ghost is that of Duncan, because Macbeth says:

> Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;

meaning Duncan dead for some time. And again:

> Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
> Shall never tremble:

meaning that of all the horrors that might appear none could be worse than the King whom he murdered with his own hand when he was his honoured guest. Against that, we have the challenge,

> Or be alive again
> And dare me to the desert with thy sword;

which Macbeth would hardly say to Duncan but would say to his soldier colleague, Banquo. Those of this contention in its various departments have some who, respecting the stage directions, point out that the first ghost is well labelled as Banquo, who enters and exits, but on the next appearance, the stage direction says *Enter* Ghost: not *Re*-enter Ghost, and that consequently it is not the same Ghost but a different one. To me this is a deliberate attempt to make the situation complicated for no reason. If Shakespeare had thought of bringing in Duncan's Ghost, he would surely have made the matter plain. I

don't suppose that he ever thought of it. Had he done so, he would surely have made it clear in his script. Neither do I think that he intends Ross to be the arch villain. In this scene he surely gathers enough to make him extremely suspicious of Macbeth. We next meet him at the castle of Macduff, where to me his attitude sounds perfectly sincere. He was not alone in joining the other Thanes who fled from Macbeth. Even Lenox, who is with Macbeth in the fourth act, has deserted him in the fifth.

The scene is dreadful in its power of horror, mounting to a great climax when the Ghost disappears for the second time. But I think the most awe-inspiring part of it is its anti-climax, when the guests have gone, and the guilty couple are left alone in that great Hall, and Macbeth goes on talking to himself, when he thinks he is still explaining things to his guests. The same guests to whom he has said,

> You make me strange
> Even to the disposition that I owe,
> When now I think you can behold such sights,
> And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
> When mine are blanch'd with fear,

are to him still there, and to them he goes on explaining, *It will have blood*, etc., till *the secret'st man of blood.* He then realizes that the guests are no longer in the Hall. His brain tries to right itself. Of late he has been taking the initiative, without having to be goaded on by his wife. He asks her opinion concerning Macduff's absence. He tells her of his spy system in the Thanes' castles. He goes on to say that he will go the next day to the weird sisters and make them speak more. He hints to her that he has other plans which he will not discuss till they are accomplished. He resolves that everything must give way to serve his good, and that to repent would be as long and as tedious a journey as to wade on to ultimate power through blood. He is told that he is in need of sleep. He answers to the effect that all that is needed is to accustom oneself to more crime. Of the many ways of ending this great scene, I always see this as the best. Macbeth rises wearily to go with Lady Macbeth in search of sleep. He wants to leave the Hall, where he has seen such sights. He sees a flagon of wine, and filling a goblet from it, he toasts the success of the awful deeds he is contemplating. He utters the words, "*We are yet but young in deed*," with the goblet raised, and then drinks to the time when he will be *old in*

deed, and therefore free of the fears that attend on them. He drinks the contents of the goblet, and the strong drink causes the final collapse of his brain. The goblet falls from his fingers, and he lets out screams of hysterical laughter, while Lady Macbeth, unable to endure more, sinks unconscious to the floor at his feet. In stage versions this is the end of the act. The next two scenes, if used, must go into the next act, though I have seen the Lenox dialogue with the Lord added to the end of the Banquet. There is no action in it, and was used by Shakespeare to stress the unhappy times existing in Scotland under Macbeth's tyranny. It informs the audience that Macduff has gone to England to urge help from Edward the Confessor who is entertaining Malcolm, by stirring up Northumberland's Earl, Siward.

The scene that follows the Banquet is :

THE HEATH.

Many editors call it *A* heath. *The* heath seems to suggest that it is the same heath upon which the weird sisters accosted Macbeth and Banquo. The neighbourhood is Forres. The scene is often transferred to the Witches' Cavern of the next act. Hecate, the mistress of witches, also appears in that scene. The song, which follows Hecate's announcement that Macbeth will come to ask them his destiny, is from Middleton's *Witch*, hence the first words only are printed in the stage direction. In all probability four lines only were used in *Macbeth*. It ran thus :

Come away : come away :
Hecate, Hecate, come away,

in the air. Hecate sings in reply, looking into the air :

I come, I come, I come, I come,
With all the speed I may.

Irving included more lines in his production :

Over woods, high rocks and mountains,
Over seas, our mistress' fountains ;
Over steeples, towers and turrets,
We fly by night, 'mongst troops of spirits :
No ring of bells to our ear sounds,
No howls of wolves, no yelp of hounds.

FORRES. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This scene finishing the act in the text, between Lenox and Another Lord, we have already discussed in the Banquet Scene. The next act opens with :

A DARK CAVE.

This is the Witches' Cavern. *In the middle, a great Cauldron boiling. Thunder.*

I see no reason why these are not the same three witches that met Macbeth and Banquo on the Heath. Macbeth has said that he is going to visit the weird sisters, and in the Heath Scene of the third act we have heard Hecate calling them *saucy and over-bold*, for daring to traffic with Macbeth in riddles and affairs of death. The contention is that weird sisters were above the mere witches, and that the witches of this scene do not tell Macbeth the riddles as they did in their first meeting with him, but call their masters from Below. But in spite of Hecate's commands they have asked Macbeth whether they shall speak themselves or call their masters, and he asks to see them. Actually the appearance of Hecate in this scene serves no purpose in the action unless as an excuse for introducing another song. The first two words only are given in the stage direction, but it is also from Middleton's Witch, and runs as follows :

> Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray ;
> Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may.
> Titty, Tiffin, keep it stiff in ;
> Firedrake, Puckey, make it lucky ;
> Liard, Robin, you must bob in.
> Round, around, around, about, about ;
> All ill come running in, all good keep out !

This scene is put in with all its spells and incantations to please King James, and at last bringing on the Show of Eight Kings, who are his ancestors and descended from Banquo. That is, seven of them are his predecessors, for the eighth is himself, and the glass he carries which shows many more is symbolic for the kings that shall be of his house. Actually, the first King is Robert II, and the second Robert III. The others are the six Jameses.

The queer titles of the Apparitions are also symbolic. The Armed Head is Macbeth's own head, cut off after being killed by Macduff and carried in triumph to Malcolm., The Bloody Child is Macduff as a baby ripped from his mother's womb ; and

the Child Crowned, with a Tree in his hand, is Malcolm, with a bough in his hand as when he orders his soldiers to hew down the boughs of Birnam to carry to Dunsinane. Of the two riddling prophecies that so deceive Macbeth, Holinshed writes:

> A certain witch, whom he had in great trust, had told that he should never be slain with man born of any woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Birnam came to the castle of Dunsinane. By this prophecy, Macbeth put all fear out of his heart, supposing he might do what he would, without any fear to be punished for the same, for by the one prophecy he believed it was impossible for any man to vanquish him, and by the other impossible to slay him.

I remember an amusing incident happening in America during the Show of the Eight Kings. The Armed Head was played by an actor (now a distinguished star, Dudley Digges) and he played the Fourth King as well. Cloaks, crowns and sceptres were laid ready in the dark by the entrance. Each king carried an electric bulb in the folds of his cloak to light up his face. On one occasion two of the kings, knowing how Dudley had to crawl off stage and change, pulled his leg by hiding his props. The Third King passed across the back, and the Macbeth said, "*A fourth? Start eyes!*" but no Fourth appeared, so Macbeth, becoming temperamental, as Macbeths are entitled to do at this stage of the job, repeated the line with withering sarcasm. Mysterious voices in the dark whispered to Digges to go on. Macbeth, now in a rage, said the line for the third time with greater emphasis, when the poor King, who took his work very seriously, burst out with the explanation, "SOMEONE HAS STOLEN MY CROWN! MY CLOAK! MY SCEPTRE AND MY ELECTRICAL BULB!"

A few years ago I was being entertained at the Players' Club in New York, when my host pointed out someone who had just crossed the room. "Do you know that man?" my host asked me. "One of the best actors in America. Dudley Digges."

I had not seen him for about thirty years, so I went up to him and said: "Mr. Digges, I don't suppose you'll remember me, but I have something to say to you. SOMEONE HAS STOLEN MY CROWN! MY CLOAK! MY SCEPTRE AND MY ELECTRICAL BULB!" Though outwardly polite, I could see that he was wondering who had asked a lunatic into the club, for the old joke against him he had forgotten. Assuring him that I wasn't quite mad, I repeated another of his well-remembered sayings. "I met you," I told him, "before you were on the stage, when you were a

FIRST AND LAST GLEN OF SCOTLAND SHOWING BRUCE'S CAVE

THE PERCY STRONGHOLD, WARKWORTH

front of the house manager for Ben Greet's Pastoral Players, and you used to ring the changes in a loud voice by the pay-box, shouting out, '*As You Like It. One dollar. No pushing. No pushing. One dollar. As You Like It.*'" He remembered that, because Ben Greet thought that a voice which could carry so well in the open air would be heard by an audience, so took him from the front, back stage. The incident brought me back to him, and we fell to, like old veterans talking of "thirty years ago".

This reminds me of another calamity that happened in this scene during the same tour. We were playing in the Hall of an American College, where there was a huge organ at the back of the stage. In order to look over the screens at the witches below, the Macbeth had to stand on a rickety rostrum erected in front of the organ seat, where the college organist was sitting to play the witches' dance music. Having embarked with great energy into his first speech, he reached the line, "*Though castles topple on their warders' head,*" when the rostrum collapsed backwards, and shot Macbeth on to the head of the organist, who was borne down with Macbeth on top of him upon the organ manuals. The organ was full of air, and the stops all out ready for the dance. The noise of that discord filled the Hall, and since neither Macbeth nor the unfortunate organist could move, the discord continued to fill it. Disaster was always meat and drink to Ben Greet even in his own shows, and above the noise of the full organ we could hear his voice singing out in the dark, behind the screens, "And I played one chord on the organ, like the sound of a great AMEN."

To the shouts of mirth from the audience, Macbeth had to disentangle himself from the organ, apologize to the organist, and appear on the stage to carry on with the scene, which was the cue for a facetious student to call out: "Can old man Macbeth play the bagpipes?" To which all the students shouted back: "RA! RA! RA!"

The end of the scene after the witches vanish proves that these witches are the same weird sisters, for Macbeth asks Lenox whether he saw them, calling them the weird sisters. Up to this point Shakespeare has worked the actor playing Macbeth full time and at full energy. He now realizes that for the strenuous finish in the part, the leading man must have a rest. You can trace this knowledgeable consideration for his principal players all through his work. We now go to a different part of Scotland for our next setting.

FIFE. A ROOM IN MACDUFF'S CASTLE.

There seems to be a good deal of uncertainty as to the exact locality of Macduff's Castle. The most popular decision is that the massacre took place in a fortress of which only two towers remain, quadrangular in shape, some three miles from Dysart on the Fifeshire coast. But there are other remains which are claimed as the residence of Lady Macduff when her husband had gone into England for help. A good deal of criticism has been levelled against Macduff for leaving his wife and children, when he had refused to attend the Court of Macbeth after he had been summoned. To get on the wrong side of this tyrant was dangerous, for as Holinshed says, "*This vain hope* [the witches' promises] *caused him to do many outrageous things, to the grievous oppression of his subjects.*" Macduff probably felt his absence from home safe on two counts. The first, that he made the journey secretly, and did not suspect that Macbeth had a spy in his own castle in Fife who reported his every movement to the King. Secondly, by virtue of being Thane of Fife, he was a powerful man in Scotland, and would have left his castle well protected. There is a tradition that he owned the castle of Dunnemarle, Culross, and no doubt other fortified residences in Fife. Of course he was not aware that Macbeth had been warned to beware of him. He had shown his abhorrence at the murder of Duncan and had then withdrawn into Fife, no doubt to escape the presence of Macbeth, whom he suspected. The playing of this scene is of immense help to the play, because it shows the audience beforehand what Macduff is told later, namely the massacre of his wife and son. The Messenger that comes to warn Lady Macduff of the approaching danger is placed by some as one of the murderers who repents his promise to help others commit such a crime, and gets there just before the murder. I have also heard him described as a messenger sent by Lady Macbeth, who, not being able to countenance more bloodshed, tries her best to save Macduff's family. Certainly the messenger is unknown to Lady Macduff, and therefore not one of the castle servants. I can never read the Messenger speech without a feeling of panic, because it was one of the ten parts I played when first associated with *Macbeth*, and the panic was caused because my next part was the very murderer who comes in directly afterwards. I had to slip off a long robe which concealed my murderer's wardrobe underneath it, and put on a beard for my next entrance, and Lady Macduff had only six lines for me to do it in. Ben Greet loved making his young

actors do things like that. Well, I suppose it was good for us. The next scene is the only one in the play that takes us out of Scotland, but since it is entirely vague as to where Edward the Confessor held his Court during that period of Macduff's sojourn at the English King's, one does not know the locality in which to place this scene. The chroniclers tell us nothing. Shakespeare is vague. Booth called the scene A WOOD IN ENGLAND: Irving A COUNTRY LANE. The first line of Malcolm to Macduff speaks of seeking out some desolate shade. But it was not far from the Palace, since he asks the Doctor if the King is coming forth. Therefore, since no one knows exactly where this particular Palace was situated, I have not been able to include the scene amongst others laid in England. If one takes a pilgrimage to visit the shrine of Edward the Confessor, one goes to Westminster Abbey, which he built, after the first foundation had been abandoned through the ravages of the Danes. There are still parts of the Abbey shown as his work. There is no justification for placing this scene in London. It seems more likely that Edward was on one of his progresses, healing the sick. But the scene has a tremendous use in the play. Both Malcolm and Macduff have hitherto been shadowy characters to say the least. They have had little to say, but for the rest of the play they are vitally important to the dreadful climax of Macbeth; and to Lady Macbeth too, whose most poignant lines are to do with the relations of these two men.

"*The Thane of Fife had a wife; Where is she now?*" and the awful "*Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him!*"

The trick played on Macduff by Malcolm, and taken by Shakespeare practically word for word from Holinshed, helps the audience to realize the dreadful subtlety of Macbeth, in that Malcolm is uncertain of the integrity in the noble Macduff, suspecting that even he might have been persuaded to become a tool for the King. Though Holinshed gives no inkling of where the scene happened except somewhere in England near the Court, he gives the incident in full detail, and to read it gives one a firmer grasp on the subtleties of Shakespeare's dialogue.

> At length Macduff, to avoid peril of life, purposed with himself to pass into England, to procure Malcolm Cammore to claim the crown of Scotland. But this was not so secretly devised by Macduff that Macbeth had knowledge given him thereof; for kings (as is said) have sharp sight like unto Lynx, and long ears like unto Midas; for Macbeth had in every nobleman's house one sly fellow or other

in fee with him, to reveal all that was said or done within the same, by which flight he oppressed the most part of the nobles of his realm. Immediately then, being advertised whereabout Macduff went, he came hastily with a great power into Fife, and forthwith besieged the castle where Macduff dwelled, trusting to have found him therein. They that kept the house, without any resistance opened the gates, and suffered him to enter, mistrusting none evil. But nevertheless Macbeth most cruelly caused the wife and children of Macduff, with all other whom he found in that castle, to be slain. Also he confiscated the goods of Macduff, proclaimed him traitor, and confined him out of all the parts of his realm; but Macduff was already escaped out of danger, and gotten into England unto Malcolm Cammore, to try what purchase he might make by means of his support to revenge the slaughter so cruelly executed on his wife, his children, and other friends.

Though Malcolm was very sorrowful for the oppression of his countrymen the Scots, in manner as Macduff had declared; yet, doubting whether he were come as one that came unfeignedly as he spake, or else as sent from Macbeth to betray him, he thought to have some further trial; and thereupon, dissembling his mind at the first, he answered as followeth:

"I am truly very sorry for the misery chanced to my country of Scotland, but, though I have never so great affection to relieve the same, yet by reason of certain incurable vices which reign in me, I am nothing meet thereto. First, such immoderate lust and voluptuous sensuality (the abominable fountain of all vices) followeth me, that, if I were made king of Scots, I should seek to destroy your maids and matrons, in such wise that mine intemperancy should be more importable unto you than the bloody tyranny of Macbeth now is."

Hereunto Macduff answered: "This surely is a very evil fault, for many noble princes and kings have lost both lives and kingdoms for the same; nevertheless, there are women enough in Scotland, and therefore follow my counsel; make thyself king, and I shall con the matter so wisely, that thou shalt be so satisfied at thy pleasure in such secret wise that no man shall be aware thereof."

Then said Malcolm: "I am also the most avaricious creature on the earth, so that if I were king I should seek so many ways to get lands and goods, and possessions; and therefore, to show you what mischief may ensue on you through my unsatiable covetousness, I will rehearse unto you a fable. There was a fox having a sore place on him overset with a swarm of flies that continually sucked out his blood; and when one that came by, and saw this manner, demanded whether he would have the flies driven beside him, he answered, No; for if these flies that are already full, and by reason thereof suck not very eagerly, should be chased away, other that are empty and an hungered should light in their places, and suck out the residue of my blood, far more to my grievance than

these, which, now being satisfied, do not much annoy me. Therefore," said Malcolm, "suffer me to remain where I am, lest, if I attain to the regiment of your realm mine unquenchable avarice may prove such that you would think the displeasures which now grieve you should seem easy in respect of the unmeasurable outrage which might ensue through my coming amongst you." Macduff to this made answer, how it was a far worse fault than the other, "for avarice is the root of all mischief, and for that crime the most part of our kings have been slain and brought to their final end. Yet, notwithstanding, follow my counsel, and take upon thee the crown. There is gold and riches enough in Scotland to satisfy thy greedy desire."

Then said Malcolm again, "I am furthermore inclined to dissimulation, telling of leasings, and all other kind of deceit, so that I naturally rejoice in nothing so much as to betray and deceive such as put any trust and confidence in my words. Then, sith there is nothing that more becometh a prince than constancy, verity, truth, and justice, with the other laudable fellowship of those fair and noble virtues which are comprehended only in soothfastness, and that lying utterly overthroweth the same, you see how unable I am to govern any province or regiment; and, therefore, sith you have remedies to cloak and hide all the rest of my other vices, I pray you find shift to cloak this vice amongst the residue."

Then said Macduff: "This yet is the worst of all, and there I leave thee, and therefore say, oh ye unhappy and miserable Scotchmen, which are thus scourged with so many and sundry calamities, each one above other! Ye have now one cursed and wicked tyrant that now reigneth over you, without any right or title, oppressing you with his most bloody cruelty. This other, that hath the right to the crown, is so replete with the inconstant behaviour and manifest vices of Englishmen, that he is nothing worthy to enjoy it; for, by his own confession, he is not only avaricious and given to unsatiable lust, but so false a traitor withal, that no trust is to be had unto any word he speaketh. Adieu, Scotland! for now I account myself a banished man for ever, without comfort or consolation." And with those words the brackish tears trickled down his cheeks very abundantly.

At the last, when he was ready to depart, Malcolm took him by the sleeve, and said: "Be of good comfort, Macduff, for I have none of these vices before remembered, but have jested with thee in this manner only to prove thy mind: for diverse times heretofore hath Macbeth sought by this manner of means to bring me into his hands; but the more slow I have showed myself to condescend to thy motion and request, the more diligence shall I use in accomplishing the same." Incontinently hereupon they embraced each other, and promising to be faithful the one to the other, they fell in consultation how they might best provide for all their business, to bring the same to good effect.

If some complain that this scene in the Shakespeare play is dull when dealing with this Holinshed incident, they must own that from the entrance of Ross to the end he lifts his audience or readers in a wild whirlwind of emotion, and places Macduff, in spite of what we think about him in leaving his wife and babes, as the true hero of melodrama. All he asks for is to be brought front to front with Macbeth, and the onlooker knows that Shakespeare is not going to fail us in this, which carries us with lively anticipation into the next and last act.

DUNSINANE. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

Of my journeys to Dunsinane and Birnam I shall speak when treating description of the battle scenes that follow. Suffice it to say here that Dunsinane Castle was in those days a stronghold that could "*laugh a siege to scorn*", and that Macbeth felt safe in leaving his Queen behind those walls while he himself took the field in order to round up those "*many worthy fellows that were out*", the "*more and less*" who had "*given him the revolt*". He had not yet received tidings of the English army approaching. Had Macbeth been sleeping in the castle rather than taking the field with his power, he would have seen to it that Lady Macbeth did not walk in her sleep and allow her secrets to be overheard by the gentlewoman and Doctor.

There are three themes in this play which Shakespeare the courtier dwelt upon in order to interest and please King James I. First the great theme of the play, Witchcraft, on which the King was a learned authority. The next, the obvious compliment to his royal descent through the Show of the Eight Kings, and many more to come. And lastly, the King's interest and skill in doctoring, especially healing. This was the only reason for breaking the progress of the play in the scene previously. Between Malcolm's reconciliation with Macduff and the entrance of Ross, an English Doctor is introduced who talks about King Edward the Confessor's power of healing, a gift which King James boasted to possess. Malcolm's eulogy of the Confessor to Macduff is Shakespeare's eulogy to King James, and the sundry blessings that hung about his throne as well as around those of the English King in the play. At this important point of the play Shakespeare was too theatre-minded to hold up his action merely for the sake of teaching his audience an obscure but interesting piece of history. He did it as a tribute for the patronage of the reigning monarch. Holinshed gave him the authority to turn a pretty compliment to his royal listener.

> As hath been thought he [the Confessor] was inspired with the gift of prophecy, and also to have had the gift of healing infirmities and diseases. Namely, he used to help those that were vexed with the disease, commonly called the Kyng's evil, and left that virtue as it were a portion of inheritance unto his successors, the Kyngs of this Realme.

This compliment to the Kings of this Realm Shakespeare hands to James as he sits at the play, his ungainly body protected by thickly padded clothes.

The Doctor in this act is undoubtedly a good man both in character and profession, for he had evidently been summoned by the King to attend his wife, and to look after her during his temporary absence. He speaks later in the play of not wishing to come to Dunsinane again for profit. Though Macbeth once loses his temper with him, he is quick to make amends, and seems to lean upon him. Although the Doctor obviously suspects the worst from what he hears the sleeping Queen say, he is yet concerned that the gentlewoman shall look after her and keep her removed from all means of annoyance. He realizes that here is a patient who must be watched all the time, and who needs a cure to her sick soul rather than to her body. It is a wonderful scene this, even before the entrance of the sleep-walking Queen. After the stormy emotion of the last scene, the quiet of these two watching in the sleeping castle is awful in its stillness and whispering. The change from poetry to poetical prose is masterly, since it creates an atmosphere we have not yet had in this play, except perhaps for a very different reason in the Porter Scene. There, for a few minutes the audience had to be rescued from stark horror by a piece of fooling that skilfully never destroys the horror. But here we are taken from the tragedy of Macduff to the sufferings of "*the fiend-like queen*", and a new form became necessary to the dramatist. Macbeth is to go down to the noise of battle. Lady Macbeth goes down in the silence of her "*perilous dreams*", and the change of language to prose is necessary to show her subconscious mind that is never at rest.

THE COUNTRY NEAR DUNSINANE.

Drums and colours, as set down in the stage directions, come as a relief to ears and eyes after the quiet and darkness of our last glimpse of the Queen. Here we have the Thanes who fly from Macbeth on their way to join forces with the English power, led on towards Dunsinane by Siward and Macduff.

Only once is it possible to give the modern pronunciation of this famous hill, in Act IV, Scene 1, when the Third Apparition proclaims:

> Macbeth shall never vanquished be, until
> Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
> Shall come against him.

When I first journeyed to Dunsinane, I stupidly used the accent usually written in the play, in order to find my direction, but the "locals" shook their heads and gave no help. Fortunately I found a lady in the post-office at Birnam who knew her Shakespeare, and agreed that the hill should be pronounced the way I said it since Shakespeare had made it famous with that accent. *Dunsinnan*, however, it is with the "local".

From Aberfeldy, my way passed through Dunkeld, where I started my inquiries. This is an interesting little town on the banks of the Tay, with Dunkeld House, a seat of the Duke of Atholl, and the church its principal features. The church today is the choir of what was originally the cathedral, but was partly destroyed at the Reformation, but the ruins, which are national property, are picturesque. Crossing a bridge takes one to Birnam, which is opposite Dunkeld, and a very beautiful spot. Under directions from the helpful lady at the post-office, I climbed a hill and discovered a footpath which leads down to the bank of the Tay, and shaded by the glorious trees of Birnam. A few minutes' walking brought me to the monarch of the glen: a glorious old tree said to be the Last Oak of Birnam. The lower branches, heavy with foliage, are propped up with struts. Under its shade I met an elderly gentleman who introduced himself as an antiquary. I have found that this breed of humanity are divided into those who study to find out fresh truths about what has gone before, and those who try only to upset the veracity of what has already been discovered. My antiquary was of the latter breed. He showed his contrary spirit from the start of our talking about Shakespeare by affirming that he came every fine day to spend an hour at this spot in order to think about *As You Like It*. "I find this glen singularly fitting in with my idea of the Forest of Arden. I have been to Shakespeare's Arden," he said, "but on the whole, I found it NO, while this is distinctly YES. My idea, of course. The words of the text are illustrated all round one here. For instance: this tree whose antique roots——"

I interrupted. He was not at all my idea of the First Lord or

the Banished Duke, and I felt sure he was embarked upon giving me his idea of both, so I shifted the subject to *Macbeth*, saying that I could quite appreciate why the English Force chose Birnam as a good strategic position, when Dunsinane and the long line of the Sidlaw Hills was their objective.

"And I suppose you think that this tree over our heads is the only one that Malcolm's men did not cut down, eh?" he asked with withering scorn. Before I had time to answer, he went on: "This tree was never here at that time, though there are fools around here who lead people to believe so. That they encamped in this glen, yes. But that Macduff wept for his wife and children under this tree, NO. In the first place, as I say, the tree, though very old, was not even an acorn then, and I consider Macduff's tears not worth our pity. He had only himself to blame. No wonder Lady Macduff was peeved with him. Glad they killed that precocious brat though."

He went on giving me his ideas of the play and history concerning it, and it was only when he harked back to *As You Like It* that I broke away. I learnt a good deal from him as an historian, but his love of reciting was dangerous.

I hate to think that he still sits there, spoiling the romance of that tree for tourists, who might like to think that this noble fellow, so lovingly supported by its poles, is the last of the old guard at Birnam.

The Sidlaw Hills lie on the distant skyline and possess three major summits: Craigowl, the highest; then Auchterhouse Hill; and then Dunsinane, which is just over a thousand feet. Actually Birnam Hill is twelve feet higher, and there is a stretch of level ground between them about twelve miles across. Both hills commanded a good view of an approaching enemy. Today the wood of Birnam is not visible from the height of Dunsinane, which fact people have fastened upon as a mistake of Shakespeare, but there is no reason to believe that Birnam Wood did not stretch far on to the plain in those wild days, when the ground had not been cleared for agriculture. Therefore there is no reason not to take the story of the Messenger who stood his watch upon the hill word for word as Shakespeare wrote it. There is a tradition that Macbeth lived for ten years at Carnbeddie, about three miles from Dunsinane Hill in the parish of St. Martin's, where some ancient remains of a castle are called Carnbeth. The local people call it Macbeth's Castle. If this is true, then the remains of an old fort to be seen upon Dunsinane Hill could only have been used as a place of emergency or as a

last stand. So far no one has discovered any sign of a well upon the hill, which would of course be a necessary asset to any residential castle. On the other hand, it is quite likely that Malcolm, upon ascending the throne, may have utterly destroyed Dunsinane as a gesture against the late tyrant, and the well may have been filled in and lost. I spoke to a gamekeeper at the entrance of the drive leading to Dunsinane House, who told me that it was a pity his master was away as he could have told me a lot about Macbeth and the neighbourhood, but he called a lad who was strolling along and told him to explain what he knew of the Hill. I couldn't understand half the lad told me, but I gathered that he had learnt at school the meaning of Dunsinane, which of course he pronounced Dunsinnan. It means (and I since found he is right) the "hill like a nipple". Holinshed certainly speaks of Dunsinane Castle, so I, for one, made up my mind that Macbeth's Castle was on the summit of the Nipple Hill, and that there was a well in his day.

DUNSINANE. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

Here we see Macbeth clinging to his faith in the witches' prophecies and preparing to meet the enemy. In Irving's *Character of Macbeth*, the author says that he was a poet with his brain and a villain with his heart, and I think that this description comes out very forcibly in this scene. His words to the *cream-faced loon* and to Seyton show the devilish ragings in his heart. He is irritated beyond bearing, and yet to the Doctor he can show his poet's brain. But first and foremost he is the tyrant, giving orders rapidly to send out more horses and to hang those who talk of fear. He wants his armour on one minute and off the next, and finally orders it be brought after him when he strides off, compelling himself to have no fear till Birnam Forest come to Dunsinane. I am quite sure that it is legitimate for the Doctor, who follows him out, to play his two lines for a laugh. Up to now, this good doctor has shown patience and sympathy, but in these two lines he can think of himself. By reluctantly following the tyrant he can convey in these lines the fact that his professional visit to the Macbeths has given him a hell of a time and was not worth the fees. I have heard this exit received with shouts of laughter from the audience, who when all is said and done have had little chance to laugh during the performance.

COUNTRY NEAR DUNSINANE. A WOOD IN VIEW.

This is the approach of the English towards Birnam, who

have been joined here by the revolted Thanes. Malcolm gives orders for the hewing down of boughs to screen their numbers as they advance from cover on to the plain.

Holinshed gives Shakespeare the details thus:

> Malcolm, following hastily after Macbeth, came the night before the battle unto Bernane wood, and, when his army had rested awhile there to refresh them, he commanded every man to get a bough of some tree or other of that wood in his hand, as big as he might bear, and to march forth therewith in such wise that on the next morning they might come closely and without sight in this manner within view of his enemies. On the morrow, when Macbeth beheld them coming in this sort, he first marvelled what the matter meant, but in the end remembered himself that the prophecy which he had heard long before that time, of the coming of Bernane wood to Dunsinane Castle, was likely to be now fulfilled.

DUNSINANE. WITHIN THE CASTLE.

Here again we see the poet's brain and the tyrant's heart. The cry of women is heard by the tyrant just as he is boasting of his castle's strength, that can be held out till the besiegers starve or die of the ague. Had it not been for his own men deserting to the enemy he would have met the English, he declares, to beat them backward home. When Seyton tells him that the noise is the cry of women, Macbeth says, "*I have almost forgot the taste of Fears.*" Does that *almost* mean that there is still one thing he dreads and that is the death of his Queen? She alone knows all the horror he has been through, for she has shared with him. The cry of women must have made him think that she had gone. On Seyton confirming the news which he must have dreaded, he gives way to the most perfect utterances of the poet. There is nothing that even Hamlet speaks more moving than this passage.

The Messenger who enters at the close of this speech is very often played by the *cream-faced loon.* It is quite good stage-management, as the frightened boy is a marked contrast to Macbeth. It is a grand little part to act, since it has the most dramatic moment perhaps in the whole play. A new reading of this part was suggested by Bernard Shaw during the rehearsals of Lewis Casson's production in London some years ago. He did not agree with the accepted manner of making the Messenger hysterically dramatic. He wanted to see a stolid Scot, bearded and huge of frame, whose simple brain could not understand what he had just seen. The great dramatist, who had come to

watch rehearsal through friendship to my sister, said the lines as he wished to hear them but never had. It made the most tremendous effect, my sister told me, and she said, "Oh, if only you would play it!" But even the generous G.B.S. had to refuse becoming a small-part actor. The suggestion was adopted, however, and many actors playing Macbeth might prefer it, for instead of having to top a player who is going all out to give his energy full play, he has to confront a piece of stolid stupidity. Personally, however, I think the excitement in the Messenger gives Macbeth more of a mental ladder to climb, before leaping out with "*Liar and slave.*"

DUNSINANE. A PLAIN BEFORE THE CASTLE.

A little scene of noise, in which Malcolm orders the throwing away of the Birnam boughs. Also put in out of Shakespeare's knowledge for the actor's need of breathing space. Macbeth is reaching his climax, but he has yet higher rungs to climb before the end. The next scene is often cut in stage production, which is a pity, because the contrast between the fight with Young Siward and the final one with Macduff is of value to the play.

DUNSINANE. ANOTHER PART OF THE PLAIN.

Though deceived by the prophecy concerning Birnam Wood, Macbeth yet clings to its fellow, namely that no man born of woman can harm him. This created a verbal quarrel between the two critics, Mrs. Lenox and Knight. I quote from Knight's account:

> We have again the small critics discovering oversights in Shakespeare. Mrs. Lenox, the queen of fault-finders, says, "Shakespeare seems to have committed a great oversight in making Macbeth, after he found himself deceived in the prophecy relating to Birnam wood, so absolutely rely on the other, which he had good reason to fear might be equally fallacious."
>
> If Mrs. Lenox [goes on Knight] had known as much of human nature as Shakespeare knew, she would have understood that one hope destroyed does not necessarily banish all hope;—that the gambler who has lost thousands still believes that his last guinea will redeem them;—and that the last of a long series of perishing delusions is as firmly trusted as if the great teacher, Time, had taught nothing.

The death of Young Siward has two values. One, that it calls forth from Shakespeare's pen a glorious epitaph for a young

soldier which we will speak of again, and the other that by killing this virile youngster Macbeth gains confidence about man being born of woman having no power upon him.

It seems that Macbeth was forced to make a sally from the castle walls if the stage direction can be relied upon for this scene being upon the plain. Certainly Macbeth was no coward in battle, whatever he may have been in character, such as murdering one's guest. He would, however, not wish to get his forces too far from the walls, since his men would take the opportunity of changing sides, which according to Siward and Malcolm they did. Siward says: "*The tyrant's people on both sides do fight*," and Malcolm: "*We have met with foes that strike beside us*," meaning on our side. Shakespeare does not make Macbeth run away from his castle as is given by Holinshed, who describes the battle thus:

> Nevertheless, he [Macbeth] brought his men in order of battle, and exhorted them to do valiantly; howbeit, his enemies had scarcely cast from them their boughs when Macbeth, perceiving their numbers, betook him straight to flight, whom Macduff pursued with great hatred, even till he came unto Lunfannaine, where Macbeth, perceiving that Macduff was hard at his back, leaped beside his horse, saying: Thou traitor, what meaneth it that thou shouldst thus in vain follow me, that am not appointed to be slain by any creature that is born of a woman? Come on, therefore, and receive thy reward, which thou hast deserved for thy pains; and therewithal he lifted up his sword thinking to have slain him.
>
> But Macduff, quickly avoiding from his horse ere he came at him, answered (with his naked sword in his hand), saying: It is true, Macbeth, and now shall thine unsatiable cruelty have an end, for I am even he that thy wizards have told thee of; who was never born of my mother, but ripped out of her womb: therewithal he stepped unto him, and slew him in the place. Then cutting his head from his shoulders, he set it upon a pole, and brought it unto Malcolm. This was the end of Macbeth, after he had reigned seventeen years over the Scottishmen. In the beginning of his reign he accomplished many worthy acts, very profitable to the commonwealth (as ye have heard); but afterwards, by illusion of the devil, he defamed the same with most terrible cruelty. He was slain in the year of the Incarnation 1057, and in the sixteenth year of King Edward's reign over the Englishmen.

Hampered by stagecraft, Shakespeare yet far surpasses the Chronicler in description. His scene between Macbeth and Macduff is far finer. And how grand the end of this bloody

villain. Deceived to the last by the weird sisters, he is walking away bewildered as he says, "*I'll not fight with thee*," when Macduff's final taunt straightens his back into a glorious, desperate, last resistance. "*I will not yield.*" A fighter all his life, he is a fighter at the last, as on guard with shield and sword he orders Macduff to lay on.

Shakespeare makes them go off the stage fighting in order to get rid of Macbeth's body so that the property head can be brought on by Macduff and presented to Malcolm. Before that entrance we have the lines relating to Young Siward. They have a very personal appeal to me, since Young Siward was the last part that my actor brother ever played. It was at the end of his leave and he wanted to play it because of the fight, as he was a crack swordsman, and also because Sybil and I were playing the Macbeths. I always think of a ghastly moment when, in the excitement of our fight, his wig began to slip on one side. Not wishing to terminate the long fight we had arranged, with a superb gesture he swept off the offending wig and as though it were a bonnet flung it in my face and attacked with renewed energy. The audience did not laugh, though had he tried to straighten the wig they would have done. He was twenty-three when he was killed flying in France, and the lines that were spoken of the character he had last played at The Old Vic were used by us for his epitaph:

> He has paid a soldier's debt:
> He only liv'd but till he was a man;
> The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd,
> In the unshrinking station where he fought,
> But like a man he died.
> Why, then, God's soldier be he.

My brother Frank's name is among that honoured list of Theatre Men who died in the Great War which is placed on the wall of the Vestibule in Drury Lane. Compared with other professions, the theatrical one is minute, which makes that long Roll Call the more honourable.

Moberly has a textual note in his Rugby Edition to the effect that Young Siward's name was Osbeorn, and that it was his cousin named Siward who was killed in this same battle.

Holinshed makes a great point of Old Siward's Roman philosophy on being told of the death of his son.

> It is recorded also, that in the foresaid battle, in which Earl Siward vanquished the Scottes, one of Siward's sons chanced to

> be slain, whereof, though the father had good cause to be sorrowful, yet when he heard that he died of a wound which he had received in fighting stoutly in the forepart of his body, and that with his face towards the enemy, he greatly rejoiced thereat, to hear that he died so manfully.

He then goes on to quote Henry Hunt, who gives Earl Siward's actual conversation.

> And when his father heard ye news, he demanded whether he received the wound whereof he died, in ye fore part of the body, or in the hinder part: and when it was told him that he received it in the forepart, I rejoice (saith he) even with all my heart, for I would not wish wither to my son nor to myself, any other kind of death.

The play ends with Malcolm happily acclaimed King of Scotland, and using his power immediately on the battlefield, he creates the first Earls of Scotland. Of the characters in this play who received this honour, history names Fife, Menteith, Lenox, Caithness, Ross and Angus. Two other famed Scotch names, not appearing in the play, who were also raised from Thanes to Earls, were Atholl and Murrey. The title of Thane had originally been confined to the King's personal followers in Anglo-Saxon times, but later it became purchasable by any freeman who owned five hides of land, or had made three voyages. A Thane had the right to sit in the Witan, which was an assembly that could be summoned by the King when he wished advice. Persons of the Royal Family, archbishops, bishops, and abbots shared with the Thanes this honour. Malcolm then thanks every one for their support, and no doubt these lines included the audience too at the play, and invites them to see him crowned at Scone.

Therefore it is fitting when leaving Dunsinane to go to Scone, and if one cannot catch a glimpse of it except across the Tay, one will pass over a very beautiful bridge into what is called "The Fair City of Perth". This town so happily situated on that lovely river is more associated with Sir Walter Scott than with Shakespeare, through his novel, *The Fair Maid of Perth*. Until the fifteenth century the capital of Scotland, it is now a commercial county town that does big industry in dyeing, glass, linen, ironfounding and the manufacture of floorcloth. Like most old cities, brewing is on a big scale. The Earldom has been in the family of the Drummonds since 1605. James II bestowed a dukedom upon the Earl of Perth, but since this had no real

validity it was abandoned by George Drummond, in 1853, who remained Earl of Perth.

The name of Drummond conjures up visions of that lovely R.L.S. heroine, Catriona. The family were staunch Jacobites.

Having visited all the scenes connected with Shakespeare in Scotland, I went to Glasgow for a glimpse of the Exhibition.

What a crowd from the four corners of the earth! It seemed impossible to get into any hotel since rooms had been booked far in advance. But this state of things only increased that spirit of real hospitality which I have always found in Scotland. Instead of saying, "Nothing left; all rooms taken," the reception clerks went out of their way to see that people were not disappointed. In my case, when it seemed quite hopeless to get a bed anywhere, the elevator man at the hotel I had always stayed at in former visits to that jolly city invited me into the kitchens to make a list of possible places belonging to friends of the staff. This resulted in a visit to the gloomiest block of flats in the heart of the city. I climbed five flights of stone steps, past forbidding-looking doors. Had I been in Edinburgh, I should have said, "Here lives Mister Burke, or Mister Hare." Well, I knocked on the door and was received by an untidy old lady wearing a jaunty tammy. It looked unpromising, but with many "dearie-mes" she asked me into the hall of the flat, and told me she wouldn't keep me long. I was left in the dark, because the bulb had broken, as she explained. In a few minutes she returned and ushered me into a sitting-room. To my astonishment this was a luxurious drawing-room, with a very fine grand piano, and glass cabinets filled with priceless china and glass. The old lady was as astonishing as the room; for in those few minutes she had changed from a down-and-out landlady into an old-fashioned hostess gowned in flowered silk, telling me that she would sleep with her daughter, whose husband could make shift with a couch in the kitchen. She apologized all the time for not having been ready for me, till I began to think she must be mistaking me for somebody else, who had written ahead. But I soon found that this was not so, and we had quite an argument about terms, for the price she asked was so silly that I had to make her promise to accept more. She then talked about preparing me a dinner, but I wanted to get along to the Exhibition. So in place of the five-course dinner she was thinking of, she said she would arrange for a nearby garage cheaper than I could, and have supper ready for me whenever I returned. I never regretted climbing those stone steps of what seemed a house of squalor, for had I been

OLD GATEWAY, ST. ALBAN'S ABBEY

ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL. THE STALLS OF THE GARTER KNIGHTS OF WINDSOR

the Pretender himself seeking shelter from Jacobites, I could not have been more honourably received, for I ate off Crown Derby, and drank good wine from a tear-drop glass. A surprising chapter in one's life, the whole adventure, and I have since wondered what mystery caused the old lady to live shut in with beauty and luxury, though surrounded with outer squalor. Was she a philanthropist, a Haroun Al-Raschid? She was no Jekyll and Hyde. She had the true hospitality which Shakespeare loved, and was one of those "*sit you down in gentleness and take upon command what help we have that to your wanting may be minister'd*" kind of people. And there is no country in which you find more of them than in bonnie Scotland.

The historical part of the Exhibition was rich with romance, and the generous loans from the great families of the north helped to make one realize the great traditions of the country Shakespeare wrote about in *Macbeth*.

Anyone crossing the Border on the Cumberland side will naturally pass through and take note of Gretna Green. Four miles from it on the Scotland side, north, is the first and, I think, the most beautiful of all the Scottish glens. It should be visited by any leaving or entering Scotland by the western route. In its very heart it holds one of the most romantic secrets, which anyone can now pry into, in the whole of our fair land. This is King Robert the Bruce's cave. It hangs above the Kirtle, cut into the face of the precipitous rock, and in the days of its use small wonder that it was not easily discovered. It is easy to find, though, nowadays, as one will see, on the main road to Gretna Green, a large notice directing one down a lane turning off towards Cove House. A little way along this lane one passes through level-crossing gates, and so straight ahead to this most romantic spot. One is met by a typical-looking Scotch laird who still wears the kilt, who conducts you around and points out the various features of the place with an ash walking-stick. Bearded and bonneted, he is the very breed of Borderer who for centuries have lived and fought in this cockpit of contention between not only England and Scotland, but also between the feud-holding clans. In this part of the country of Dumfriesshire the ancient warring clans who held feud against each other were the Maxwells and the Johnstones, who fought a great battle in 1593 on Dryff Sands in which two thousand Johnstones defeated a superior force of Maxwells, who lost seven hundred men, while Lord Maxwell was pursued by Willie Johnstone of Kirkhill, who

cut off his hand and then slew him, taking the hand to his chief, Dunskellie, as a claim for a five-pound land in reward. Maxwell's son, determining to get even with the Johnstone Chief, appointed a meeting in 1608 with the outward object of concluding a peace between the two families. At this meeting Lord Maxwell shot Dunskellie, and being outlawed for this murder, fled to France, returning four years later, to be betrayed by one of his own relations. He was taken to Edinburgh and beheaded on the 21st of May 1613.

Such scraps of ancient history the laird host tells one as he takes one round the lovely grounds. Cove House, where he lives, is perched above the beautiful Kirtle River, and its front, looking south, commands a wide sweep of woodland, the Solway Firth, the range of the Cumberland Hills and, in the far distance, the lofty peaks of the English Lake District.

On the west side of the house the steep bank of the Kirtle is screened with fine trees, making a wonderful picture as one climbs down into the deep glen.

The Kirtle Glen has been owned from ancient days by the Irvings, and the Chief lived at Bonshaw Tower, which is two miles from Cove. This was the principal of seven Border pele towers all manned by the Irvings. It is good to think that this tower is still owned by a famous Irving, who is none other than Captain Irving of the Cunard White Star Line, who has commanded those two mighty ocean liners, the *Aquitania* and *Berengaria*. The Kirtle, which is in the lower area of Annandale over which Robert the Bruce was Lord, became the source of salvation to that great King. It is known how his first attempts to win freedom and the throne of Scotland failed, and how in his defeat he had to go into hiding. A kinsman to the Irvings of his time, he knew the secret of their cave, and under its protection he hid till he was able to take the field with a new army mustered from his scattered followers, with whom he gained his glorious victory at Bannockburn in 1314. Today it is quite simple to enter the cave from a platform bridge of wood (for the footpath down through the woods is cut off by the precipice). In the old days some sort of a ladder or rope must have been used from the waters below, for the face of the rock is unscalable. Once inside and the door closed it could be covered over with a screen of hanging foliage, so that the sharpest eye could not detect it from across the river. The clear water from the river could be drawn up in a bucket, and far beneath the mouth of the cave there lazed fat trout. An ideal place for a siege. At the time of

Bruce's hiding there was apparently an old holly bush growing from a crevice in the rock close to the opening, which helped to screen it. The doors have gone, but one can see the circular holes cut into the rock where they were hung and hinged in the rock sockets. The cave itself is a circular cavity of sixteen feet in diameter. It is not a natural formation, but has been hewn out of the solid face. Antiquaries maintain that the chisel marks take us back to the cave-dwellers, and that the labour of excavation was carried out with flint or stone implements. On each side of the entrance are peep-holes which could have been used as arrow slots in case of siege. One man could have held it against a host. On the right from the entrance or doorway can still be seen a rock ledge, which would have served as a table, and when one leans against the rock wall at the side one finds that it has been cut to support a man's back. It is most comfortable and one could stand there watching through the peep-holes for hours without fatigue. This is in contrast to the wall opposite, where can be seen the holes that carried irons for chaining up prisoners. There it is impossible to find any support for the back, though there is a second comfortable groove at the other side, so that two men could be watching together. Mine Host of the Cove House, Mr. J. G. Ritchie, will remind his visitors that it was on these famed banks of Kirtle that "Fair Helen of Kirkconnel" met her tragic end. He has written an account of it in a booklet describing the history of the Glen and the Irving country. Fair Helen was an Irving who loved one Adam Fleming. There was a rival lover, however, named Bell of Blacket House, who, revengeful against Fleming, waited one night for the lovers to keep tryst on Kirtle's bank. The faithful Helen saw him in the woods by the light of the moon levelling his carbine at her lover, so threw herself against her lover's breast and received the fatal bullet intended for him. She expired immediately in his arms. The furious Fleming drew his sword, and in a frenzy of grief and fury hacked Bell of Blacket House "*in pieces sma'*." Fleming then fled to the Continent, where he served for a time as a soldier, but never finding the peace of mind he had lost, he returned home to die upon his loved one's tomb in Kirkconnel churchyard. Mr. Ritchie quotes those two beautiful lines from the old ballad:

Oh, that I were Helen lies.
Night and day on me she crys.

I look back upon my first visit to the cave and Cove House with great pleasure, and would strongly advise anyone passing

along the highway to turn aside for an hour or so to visit the spot which is made so thrilling under Mr. Ritchie's guidance and hospitality. Although I had gone there haphazard because I saw the notice-board on the main road, and although it had really nothing to do with the job I had in following in Shakespeare's scenes, I think no spot could be more akin to the spirit of Shakespeare. Here indeed is a cave used by brave men of old, and one who was destined to be a great King, and the sequestered Glen with its associations of hiding and waiting reminded one of Shakespeare's caves and his exiles who lived in them. There is the cave of the banished Duke in *As You Like It*; the cave of Belarius in *Cymbeline*; the cave near the seashore where Timon of Athens dug for roots; there is also Prospero's cell, and the Witches' Cavern. Again, in *As You Like It*, Orlando takes his brother Oliver into his cave. What a wonderful play Shakespeare would have made of Bruce. It would have been a second compliment to James I, since from Robert the Bruce's daughter sprang the "*many more*" of Banquo's seed. This Marjorie married Walter, Steward of Scotland, and their son Robert became King of Scotland in 1371, and, as Robert II, was the first of the Stewart kings, succeeding David II, son of the great Bruce.

Like my friend the antiquarian of Birnam Wood, so did Mr. Ritchie quote Shakespeare from *As You Like It*, choosing the well-known lines of the Banished Duke with which to describe the scenery from the cave, for here one could find *tongues in trees, books in the running brooks*, and certainly wonderful *sermons in stones* that made the cave. But with all respect to my antiquarian of Birnam, Mr. Ritchie was well equipped by nature to play the Banished Duke, for he has that grandeur and aloofness which the other lacked. One had no desire to run away from his recitations. The wild nature of the Glen, accompanied by the gentle sounds of the river and woods, have given him both a wildness and a gentleness that he conveys in his passion for poetic phraseology. There is nothing so grand as a grand simplicity, and that he has, keeping in check a rugged force. I shall always remember the heartiness of his laughter as it echoed across the water from the lofty platform outside the cave. I had wished to cross the river in order to get a picture of the cave from below, and he lent me a pair of fishing boots. A young lady of the party he was showing round volunteered to cross the river too, for she also had a camera. She was provided with waders and we set off to ford the Kirtle under his directions from above. We

were getting on perfectly well, when a shaggy-looking Scotch bullock made a sudden appearance round a bend of the bank. We no longer followed directions called to us but instinctively branched off to midstream in order to avoid the ferocious-looking brute. The stones were slippery, and down we both sat, holding our cameras for safety from the water high above our heads. I was aghast to see the water running over the young lady's shoulders, when she began to laugh. For some time neither of us could move. The stones were too slippery, and we couldn't get up for laughing, and the bullock eyed us dispassionately, while the Spirit of the Glen in the shape of our Border Laird laughed loudly as he tried to give us advice from above. All I can say is that we somehow got on to the high bank without ruining our cameras.

Since writing these notes about this Glen, I find that David I of Scotland who was son of Malcolm Cammore, of the *Macbeth* play, made a certain Walter Steward of Scotland, whose descendants retained that office. This seems to point to the fact that the title of Steward came to be the family name of Stewart. In which case there is more connection with Shakespeare and the First Glen of Scotland than I thought.

Chapter Eight

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN NORTHUMBERLAND

WARKWORTH is the only place in this large county distinguished by being localized into Shakespeare's scenes. It occurs three times as a setting for the chronicles of *Henry IV*. Once in the first part, and twice in the second: three times, if we count the Induction or Chorus as a separate scene in the opening of the second part.

Its position is magnificent as a coastal defence and the Percys maintained the strong castle as a sure means of retreat. Although it is now a ruin, it is a ruin well preserved, and it is quite easy to trace its ancient grandeur. The residence of the present Duke of Northumberland is in nearby Alnwick Castle, which, although rebuilt in the baronial style, is modern, though remains of the former castle may be seen. But in the days of which Shakespeare wrote Warkworth was the chief seat of the Earl of Northumberland.

It is a wild-looking spot today, and one can well imagine those wild men, the Percys, ruling there. I reached Warkworth in the late afternoon, and the sun was shining through a wild sky of heavy threatening cloud, which gave the massive ruins a brooding, formidable appearance. Although built to withstand a siege, I managed to gate-crash my way in through the main entrance, since there appeared nobody about to give permission or to take my toll. A friendly dog encouraged me in and did the honours by showing me round. He would suddenly disappear and then reappear on some higher level, wagging his tail, and then return to fetch me by showing the right way up. He was a most competent guide, and no human could have known the place better than he. He pointed out the grandeur of the Lion Tower, and scampered about the walls of the great hall and chapel. Leaving the castle with my thoughts full of the Percys, this same dog conducted me to the village street and stopped before a cottage that advertised teas. Thinking he must know a good place when he saw one, I took his advice and many hot tea-cakes because of it, and gave the dog one for himself and full marks for knowing a good place.

An old fortified gateway guards the bridge that takes one

across the river to the market town and seaport of Northumberland, called Amble. Its harbourage is the mouth of the Coquet. Warkworth Castle had been gate-crashed before I and the dog did it, by Henry IV, who took it by force, as well as Prudhoe, eleven miles from Newcastle.

WARKWORTH. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

This is the title of the third scene of the second act in the *First Part* of *King Henry IV*. Harry Percy, better known as Hotspur, enters reading a letter, which, although not stated in the text, had been sent to him by George of Dunbar, who in the peerage of Scotland was Earl of Dunbar and March. Hotspur's withering comments upon the writer's tactful way of declining to join his plot against the King give us our Hotspur at his best, and his scene with Lady Percy is delightfully fresh and modern in spirit. Shakespeare takes the liberty of reducing the age of Hotspur in order to be a fitting contrast to his hero Prince Hal. Actually, Hotspur was fighting when Prince Hal was but a year old, for he took part in the battle at Otterbourne in 1388 and Hal was born a year before. His birthday was on August the ninth, and the battle was fought on the fifteenth of the next August. Neither could Shakespeare resist making Hal actually kill Hotspur, who really died from an arrow that pierced his brain. The Lady Percy of this scene, although addressed by her husband as Kate, was Elizabeth, daughter of the Edmund Mortimer who was third Earl of March. Shakespeare achieves the difficult task of keeping both his Harrys of this play in general admiration. They are both heroic, and had much in common, but by cleverly keeping a contrast, Shakespeare makes it possible to have two heroes upon the stage at once.

WARKWORTH. BEFORE THE CASTLE.

This is the opening of Part Two, and is labelled INDUCTION. *Enter Rumour, painted full of tongues.* This is the description of the Chorus who enters to make it clear for the audience what has really occurred at Shrewsbury and what is falsely reported at Warkworth Castle to the sick Earl of Northumberland, at the beginning of the next, or, rather, first, scene. It was Shakespeare's way of not confusing his audience.

Travers and Bardolph both bring the report that Hotspur has slain the Prince of Wales and gained the victory at Shrewsbury, and then Morton brings in the true report. I can only suppose that Shakespeare opening his play with false rumours, which

are perfectly dramatic, did not want to be thought deceiving his audience. Evidently the first scene, which is entitled THE SAME, carried straight on upon the exit of the Chorus. It is Morton who brings the real news, and tells Northumberland that Hotspur has been killed and that his men, losing heart at his death, fled in panic. Worcester was taken prisoner, and with him the furious Scot, Douglas, who had killed three men who were dressed like the King. We shall deal with this important battle when we follow Shakespeare to Shrewsbury. Northumberland, who has been pretending illness in the most crafty way, in order to see how his son's headstrong enterprise turned out, now goes the same way of caution, wanting revenge for his son's death and for the grievances he has against the King, and yet seeking safety too. We find him in the same mood in the second act, which is his next appearance. This is also set in Warkworth and is titled WARKWORTH. BEFORE THE CASTLE.

Here he is contending still with his own wavering mind as to which way to go for his own advantage. But in place of warriors and diplomatists to argue with he is confronted by the two ladies of the house. His wife, Lady Northumberland, and Hotspur's widow, Lady Percy. His wife gives up trying to dissuade him from going to war because he maintains that it is the only honourable thing to do. In reality he thinks not of honour at all, but having failed to back up his son at Shrewsbury when his presence and followers might have turned the scales in Hotspur's favour, he is now afraid of failing such friends that are left to him. The plot of the Archbishop of York may succeed, he thinks, and if he has failed the rebellion twice, he will not stand in on its gain. He knows that his daughter-in-law has spoken the truth when she accuses him of having failed his son and her husband, and yet he still wishes to play the waiting game. In short, he decides to retire to Scotland, and from there to join whichever party has the more power. Shakespeare certainly makes the character of Northumberland more despicable than history, for Holinshed gives his escape into Scotland after the mean stratagem of Westmoreland in Yorkshire, when his truce betrayed the Archbishop and Nottingham to their executions. Here was sufficient cause to make Northumberland seek safety in flight, but where Shakespeare places his escape and hiding only makes him a coward and time-server. Perhaps the dramatist wished to carry out to the full the despicable character which he had built up in Northumberland in the play of *Richard II.*

And so we leave Warkworth and the county of Northumber-

land as far as Shakespeare deals with the locality. In the Induction he gives a very apt description of the castle in one line when he calls it: "*This worm-eaten hold of ragged stone.*"

It is old and ragged, and rugged too, and was there long before the great and powerful Percys owned it, for anciently it was the seat and barony of the Claverings, and was bestowed by Edward III upon Henry Percy, the ancestor of the Earls of Northumberland. Many times this family forfeited it, but during Edward IV's reign it came to them permanently. In a *History of the County* published in 1811, the compiler says of Warkworth:

> It is not certainly known when this castle was built: but from the circumstances of the Percy arms being put up in several parts of the building, some have supposed that it was erected by that family; but by a slight inspection, it is easily perceived that they have been inserted into the walls at an after period. This is clearly proved by one of them having fallen out, and the place where it was fixed appears to be cut in the wall, about six inches deep. The doors, the windows, and everything about the place, attest that it had been built at a more early period.

In Shakespeare's play, which on principle has to be more or less a compressed form of actual history, it certainly appears as though the rebellion of Northumberland with the Archbishop and Mowbray broke out immediately following the Battle of Shrewsbury. Actually, the very crafty Earl submitted himself openly to the King, who at the time needed the name of such a powerful baron amongst his friends, and for this purpose he restored him to many of his forfeited honours. The activities of this conspiracy are given in Holinshed:

> Whilst such things were in hand betwixt the English and French, the king was minded to have gone into Wales against the Welsh rebels, that under their chieftain, Owen Glendower, ceased not to do much mischief still against the English subjects. But, at the same time, to his further disquieting, there was a conspiracy put in practice, against him at home by the Earl of Northumberland, who had conspired with Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, Thomas Mowbray, Earl Marshal, son to Thomas Duke of Norfolk, who for the quarrel betwixt him and King Henry had been banished (as before ye have heard), the lords Hastings, Fauconbridge, Berdolfe, and diverse others. It was appointed that they should meet all together with their whole power, upon Yorkeswold, at a day assigned, and that the Earl of Northumberland should be chieftain,

promising to bring with him a great number of Scots. The archbishop, accompanied with the Earl Marshal, devised certain articles of such matters as it was supposed, that not only the commonalty of the realm, but also the nobility, found themselves aggrieved with: which articles they showed first unto such of their adherents as were near about them, and after sent them abroad to their friends further off, assuring them that for redress of such oppressions they would shed the last drop of blood in their bodies, if need were. The archbishop not meaning to stay after he saw himself accompanied with a great number of men, that came flocking to York to take his part in this quarrel, forthwith discovered his enterprise, causing the articles aforesaid to be set up in the public streets of the city of York, and upon the gates of the monasteries, that each man might understand the cause that moved him to rise in arms against the king, the reforming whereof did not yet appertain unto him. Hereupon, knights, esquires, yeomen, and other of the commons, assembled together in great numbers, and the archbishop coming forth amongst them, clad in armour, encouraged, exhorted, and by all means he could, pricked them forth to take the enterprise in hand, and thus not only all the citizens of York, but all other in the countries about, that were able to bear weapons, came to the archbishop, and to the Earl Marshal. Indeed the respect that men had to the archbishop, caused them to like the better of the cause, since the gravity of his age, his integrity of life, and incomparable learning, with the reverend aspect of his amiable personage, moved all men to have him in no small estimation.

This popularity of the Archbishop weighed a good deal with Northumberland when he is about to leave Warkworth, but Shakespeare at all events does not bring him to the stage again, but makes his many thousand reasons hold him back.

Chapter Nine

LANCASTER AND THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN YORKSHIRE

STRANGE that there is no scene laid in Lancaster when the name is as important as York in the chronicle plays. Having visited York on my way to Scotland I felt I had to stay in Lancaster on my way down, because though it is not a Shakespearian setting, it certainly holds a good deal of his atmosphere. I arrived after dark as I had lingered so long in the last Glen of Scotland and had to stop again at Gretna Green, just because a visit to the Blacksmith's is a thing one has to do. There was some sort of carnival week in progress, with a Fair in the town, but when I got there the whole place seemed deserted because Morecambe, the seaside resort, was to be illuminated, and the inhabitants had gone to see the fun. I found the County Hotel large and comfortable, and the food as good as one could find anywhere in England, and after an excellent dinner I sauntered out and roamed around the deserted precincts of the grand old castle, promising myself a thorough exploration the next morning. I pictured midnight messengers arriving before the great gateway, their horses' hoofs ringing on the cobblestones. I imagined the mighty John o' Gaunt waiting to receive them, the greatest giant of those barons of England whose sway, this way or that, ruled the country and the crown too. From those dark walls came the House of Lancaster with their line of kings, that lasted from 1399 to 1461, to be superseded by the equally powerful House of York. The Duke of Lancaster, which is a title borne by the King of England, was first bestowed on Edmund, the younger son of Henry III, and it was passed on to his great-grandson Henry in 1351, who enjoyed it for five years, when on his death it came to his daughter who married John o' Gaunt. The Estates of the Duchy of Lancaster are mostly derived from properties in Lancashire and Staffordshire. Today they are managed by a Council under a Chancellor, who is a member of the Government.

The next morning I went round the castle, which is now used as the law courts, and also houses a museum. The finest feature is its main gateway, which stands high up above the cobbled slope. Adjoining it is the Priory and Parish Church. The town of

Lancaster suffered very severely during the Black Death, which carried off some three thousand of the inhabitants, and it is said that the Prior sought safety in flight, and that the Priory was vacant while the scourge lasted. It was about that time, however, that a more laudable work was being carried on in the Priory Church, which today is one of the gems of ecclesiastical workmanship, and that is the canopied stalls in the chancel. The great Ruskin describes their lacework as the finest of its kind in Great Britain. The perforated tracery of each bay is different, so that one must praise the inventive genius of the craftsman who scorned to repeat himself in detail, though keeping the whole design uniform. There are some very beautiful, if grotesque, carvings of allegorical figures carved on the under parts of the misericords. These tip-up seats, which are to be seen in so many ancient stalls, are supposed by some to have been conceived for the monk's convenience, in that he could get some support when standing in his place. But I think that their main invention was for the monks' inconvenience, and that Abbots who suspected their flock of slumbering during their discourses made them tilt up their seats and balance upon the edge, when the first nod of drowsiness would tilt them forward. The punishment of discomfort and the shame of being found out, however, would have also hurt the Abbot's pride, and a continual bang-banging of tilted monks must have been a noisy advertisement for the dullness of his sermon. There are some fine examples of these hinged seats in the Henry VII Chapel in the Abbey, and in St. George's, Windsor. Lancaster, protected by the Lune River, whose mouth runs out into Morecambe Bay, is the river port of the county, the market town too. It boasts a certain amount of shipping, and its chief industries are engineering works and the making of linoleum. It is also the headquarters of that famous regiment known as The King's Own.

Against the county of Lancashire the county of York has many important settings in Shakespeare's plays, all taken from the Histories. In fact, there are seventeen scenes laid in Yorkshire and mostly used in the warring scenes between the Houses of York and Lancaster. The first Yorkshire scene used as a setting in Shakespeare, when we follow the Histories in chronological order, is Pontefract, or, as Shakespeare calls it, Pomfret. Its first setting occurs in the last act of *King Richard II.* In Scene I of this act the Earl of Northumberland tells Richard that the mind of Bolingbroke is changed and that instead of going to the Tower, Richard is to be taken to Pomfret, towards which

he goes, saying: "*I towards the north, Where shivering cold and sickness pines the clime.*"

A dreadful spot in England, and to be made more dreadful in the play of *Richard III*, Pontefract is nine miles from Wakefield, near the junction of the Aire and Calder. The ill-famed castle is in ruins, but in its broken walls its strong tragedy is not obscured. We have already spoken of the surmises that have been brought forward regarding mystery connected with Richard's death, but we must deal with the version according to Shakespeare, who took his data from Holinshed. Speaking of Sir Pierce of Exton he says:

> This knight incontinently departed from the court, with eight strong persons in his company, and came to Pomfret, commanding the esquire who was accustomed to sew and take the assay before King Richard, to do so no more, saying: "Let him eat now, for he shall not long eat." King Richard sat down to dinner, and was served without courtesy or assay, whereupon much marvelling at the sudden change, he demanded of the esquire, why he did not his duty; "Sir (said he) I am otherwise commanded by Sir Pierce of Exton, which is newly come from King Henry." When King Richard heard that word, he took the carving knife in his hand, and strake the esquire on the head, saying: "The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee together."

It was after this that Richard is supposed to have killed outright four of his assailants, and Holinshed describes Exton's part in the fight in which certainly Richard went down like a lion, a courage, which we can never deny him, leaping out of his desperation. There is a tradition that he seized a battle-axe with which he laid about him. Holinshed goes on:

> Sir Pierce [he spells it Piers] half dismayed herewith, leapt into [he means *on* to] the chair where King Richard was wont to sit, while the other four persons fought with him, and chased him about the chamber [he had disposed of the other four of Exton's eight strong men]. And in conclusion, as King Richard traversed his ground, from one side of the chamber to another, coming by the chair, where Sir Pierce stood, he was felled with a stroke of a pollax, which Sir Pierce gave him upon the head, and therewith rid him out of life, without giving him respite once to call to God for mercy of his passed offences. It is said, that Sir Pierce of Exton, after he had thus slain him, wept right bitterly, as one stricken with the prick of a guilty conscience, for murdering him, whom he had so long time obeyed as king.

Shakespeare departs from Holinshed in giving Richard a short dying speech after the fatal blow. The violence of this end is in contrast to the quiet and poetical opening of the scene, with the beautifully worded soliloquy when Richard compares his prison to the world, and the exquisite duologue between the King and his sometime groom of the stable, who tells him about Bolingbroke riding to his coronation upon Richard's favourite horse, Roan Barbary.

The other occasion on which Shakespeare uses Pomfret as a setting is in *Richard III*, Act III, Scene 3.

POMFRET. BEFORE THE CASTLE.

Here we see Ratcliff conducting Rivers, Vaughan, and Grey to execution. Rivers refers to Richard's death in the same castle with :

> O Pomfret, Pomfret! O thou bloody prison,
> Fatal and ominous to noble peers!
> Within the guilty closure of thy walls
> Richard the Second here was hack'd to death.
> And, for more slander to thy dismal seat,
> We give thee up our guiltless blood to drink.

It is recorded that none of these unfortunates was given a trial. Lingard mentions this fact in his account :

> Ratcliffe, at the head of a numerous body of armed men, entered the castle of Pontefract [Pomfret] and made himself master of the lord Grey, Sir Thomas Vaughan and Sir Richard Hawse. [Historically Rivers was executed some days after Grey and Vaughan.] To the spectators it was announced that they had been guilty of treason; but no judicial forms were observed; and the heads of the victims were struck off in the presence of the multitude.

Today the name Pomfret is retained in Pontefract by the making of liquorice cakes called Pomfret cakes, but Pontefract is the accepted title of this market town.

A ROOM IN THE ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE.

This is the title of the fourth and last scene of Act IV in the *First Part* of *Henry IV*. The Palace of the Archbishops of York

lies outside the city of York in the little village of Bishopsthorpe, of which the Archbishop is the incumbent. A strange situation for such an exalted dignitary to be a humble parish priest at the same time, and a great honour for the parishioners of such a remote spot, for Bishopsthorpe does not seem to be so near to a great city like York. The atmosphere is entirely rural. It is a beautifully situated palace, lying beyond a dignified gatehouse, with an antique clock set above the archway, through which the parishioners get a glimpse of their august rectory. The great city of York, with its rich traditions in our history, we shall discuss in a later scene of *Henry VI* trilogy. This scene under discussion is of the simplest. Only two characters are concerned in it. The Archbishop and a Gentleman Messenger, whom some editors call Sir Michael. The plotting prelate is in a pessimistic mood about the battle which he hears will be fought on the following day at Shrewsbury between the King and his hastily levied army against Hotspur. The Archbishop is well informed. He knows that Northumberland has failed his son and that Mortimer has not joined Hotspur. The Gentleman tries to cheer him with the names of the Douglas, Worcester, Mordake and Vernon, and then departs with the letters to the Lord Marshal and the Archbishop's cousin, Scroop. The Archbishop knows that if the King wins at Shrewsbury, he will advance against him, since his confederacy has come to the King's ears.

The next scene laid in Yorkshire comes as the third and last of the first act in *Henry IV*, Part II.

YORK. A ROOM IN THE ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE

Here we find the Archbishop of York in his Palace consulting with Hastings, Bardolph, and the Earl Marshal, Mowbray. It is a round-table conference, with no action, and made dull by reason of its being sandwiched in between two excellent Falstaff passages. Once again it is Northumberland who is the doubtful problem. With his powers at their back they are confident of the issue against the King, but they have had the experience of Shrewsbury. Hotspur had built on hopes and, disappointed, failed. This gives the council of war a safety-first complex, till they weigh up the odds already against the King who is not only having to deal with their conspiracy, but with France and Wales at the same time. This weighs them to set on with their dangerous enterprise.

A FOREST IN YORKSHIRE.

The opening lines of the first scene of the fourth act tell us which forest this is. "*'Tis Gaultree Forest.*"

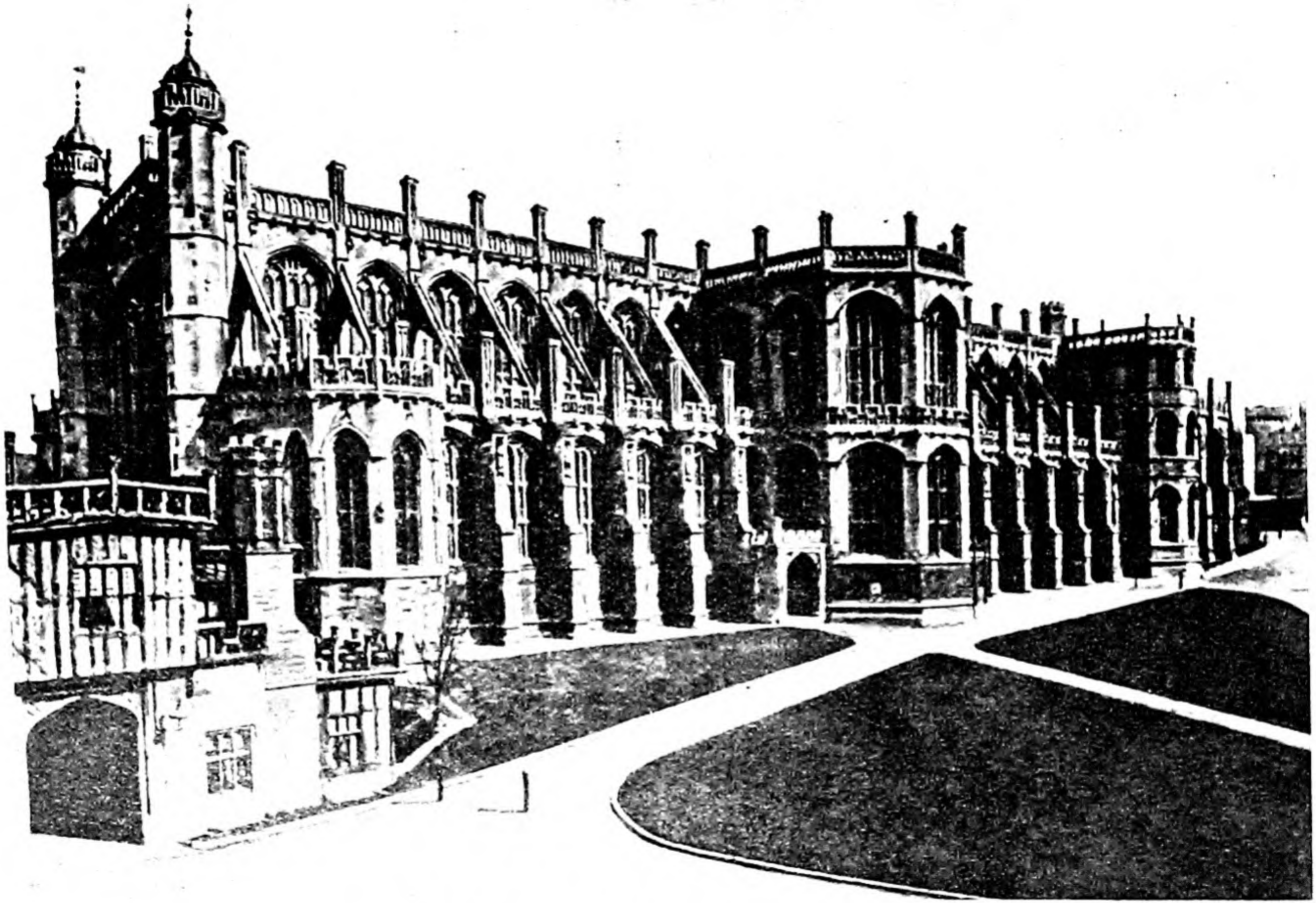
In the North Riding of Yorkshire up to the year 1670 there existed a great royal forest called Galtres, or as it is spelt in the Folio, Gaultree. Lying to the north of the city of York, it covered in Shakespeare's time something like a hundred thousand acres. On either side of a plain somewhere within this great forest the two forces were encamped. The Archbishop, backed with Mowbray and Hastings, led his rebellious force against Prince John of Lancaster, who, with Westmoreland, was in command of the King's army. When Westmoreland saw the power that lay against them, he persuaded the prince into allowing him to deal with the matter first with a parley, from which he hoped to bring off a strategy which, on the face of it, was neither just nor honourable. He goes to the Archbishop and in fair words of greeting from the Prince asks the reasons for the prelate turning soldier. The confederates, having already drawn up articles stating the wrongs which they intended to right, deliver this schedule to Westmoreland to carry to the Prince, who, they are given to understand, carries full authority from the King to deal with them.

It is mutually agreed that they shall meet Prince John in person on the plain between the opposing armies. This occurs in the next scene.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST.

Here, Prince John, on the advice of Westmoreland, pretends to be well pleased with the demands set down in the schedule, but against the means of using armed force in order to bring them to the King's notice. He gives his word of honour that all shall be set right, and proposes that in the eyes of both their armies they shall drink a friendly toast and embrace, before disbanding their forces. This is welcomed by the Archbishop, and Hastings sends a captain to pay off his followers. The Prince sends Westmoreland too, in the pretence of dismissing the royal forces.

Westmoreland returns first to say that the royal army will not go till they have heard the Prince speak to them. At that moment Hastings returns to say that the Archbishop's force have broken up like a school and gone already towards their homes, and Westmoreland immediately arrests him, the Archbishop and Mowbray of High Treason. When the Archbishop asks if the proceeding is just and honourable, he replies with another question: "*Is your assembly so?*" A clever piece of logic and no



ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR CASTLE, BEFORE RESTORATION

THE CURFEW TOWER DUNGEON, WINDSOR CASTLE. (NOTE THE STOCKS)

doubt the means of saving the lives of many hundreds of men, but the trick was a direct breach of faith if ever there was one.

The next scene carries on the action in the same locality of Gaultree.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST.

Here we have a more welcome villain than the scheming Westmoreland in the shape of Falstaff, who by a piece of luck has captured a knight named Coleville of the dale. Nothing has been discovered about this man except that a Sir John Coleville was executed with Hastings at Durham. The Archbishop and Earl Marshal were beheaded outside the city walls of York. Falstaff has no use for Prince John, whom he calls a sober-blooded boy who cannot be made to laugh, the reason being that he drank no wine. We are glad he didn't, since it is the cause of Falstaff's great eulogy upon sherris-sack. It is the real Falstaff thinking aloud. In his mind we see the difference between the two royal brothers, Harry and John. Poor Falstaff. He little knows what is in store for him at the hands of both these princes. He goes off to plunder Master Shallow.

A ROOM IN SANDAL CASTLE, NEAR WAKEFIELD, IN YORKSHIRE.

A lengthy title, but a short scene in this second one of the first act in the *Third Part* of *Henry VI.* Its value is the development of Richard's character. It shows him persuasive and cunning, using logic for his own ends. He persuades his father, who has taken oath to let Henry VI remain King during his life on condition that he himself or his son is heir, that the oath was not a legal one, and consequently can be broken without loss of honour.

Sandal Castle is three miles from the city of Wakefield, and though now a ruin, was in these days of the Wars of the Roses a great Yorkist stronghold. No sooner has Richard swayed his father to his way of thinking, than a messenger arrives with the news that the Queen, indignant with her husband for having dispossessed the Prince of Wales, is leading an army against Sandal Castle. Though greatly outnumbered, the Yorkists determine not to wait siege, but to take the field immediately.

The next scene takes us to the battlefield.

PLAINS NEAR SANDAL CASTLE.

This battlefield lay between the castle and the city of Wakefield, and Richard of York, boasting that he had never endured

siege when Regent in France, led his army down the slope in good order, but the odds were against him, and in this, the third scene, we see the poor lad Rutland with his tutor, a chaplain, trying to escape. Clifford, seeking personal revenge against the Yorkists, meets them and, scorning the entreaties of the schoolmaster, Sir Robert Aspall, whose life he spares because of his priest's habit, murders the unfortunate lad directly the tutor has been dragged away. For this wilful stabbing of a defenceless boy, Clifford was accounted by the chroniclers as a tyrant and no gentleman. Clifford apparently stabbed him while he was kneeling and asking mercy, saying that he had done him no harm, to which Clifford had replied that his father had slain his, and that he would kill the whole family. York would have been wiser to have remained within the strong walls and lofty towers of Sandal than to have taken the field as he did. He might have saved his life and that of his young son, Rutland, for he had Warwick with the Londoners, the Duke of Norfolk, and Lord Cobham with the Kentish men, and many others who would have come to raise the siege.

Scene 4 brings the act to a close with a tremendous climax.

THE SAME.

Here we see the defeat of the Yorkists by the Queen, and the horrible death which she metes out to York, taunting him with a paper crown upon his head and showing him a napkin stained with young Rutland's blood. Shakespeare makes the Queen appear a veritable tigress, in making her the principal of a deed which neither Hall nor Holinshed ascribe to her, though both these chroniclers vary in their description of York's death, and it is interesting to compare them.

Hall says:

> This cruel Clifford and deadly bloodsupper, not content with this homicide, or childkilling, came to the place where the dead corpse of the Duke of York lay, and caused his head to be stricken off, and set on it a crown of paper, and so fixed it on a pole, and presented it to the queen, not lying far from the field, in great despite and much derision, saying, Madam, your war is done, here is your king's ransom: at which present was much joy and great rejoicing; but many laughed then that sore lamented after, as the queen herself, and her son: and many were glad then of other men's deaths, not knowing that their own were near at hand, as the Lord Clifford, and other. But, surely, man's nature is so frail, that things passed be soon forgotten, and mischiefs to come be not foreseen.

After this victory by the queen and her party obtained, she caused the Earl of Salisbury, with all the other prisoners, to be sent to Pomfret, and there to be beheaded, and sent all their heads, and the Duke's head of York, to be set upon poles over the gate of the city of York, in despite of them and their lineage.

Compare the difference now with Holinshed :

Some write that the duke was taken alive, and in derision caused to stand upon a molehill, on whose head they put a garland instead of a crown, which they had fashioned and made of segges or bulrushes, and having so crowned him with that garland they kneeled down afore him as the Jews did to Christ in scorn, saying to him: Hail, king without rule; hail, king without heritage; hail, duke and prince without people or possessions. And at length, having thus scorned him with these and divers other the like despiteful words, they stroke off his head, which (as ye have heard) they presented to the queen.

By making the Queen present at his death, Shakespeare gives Richard of Gloster more reason to hate Margaret in the play of *Richard III.* As though the incidents of the bloody napkin and crown were not horrible enough, Shakespeare actually makes Margaret stab the Duke after Clifford has done so, and her last couplet which closes the act is as grim as anything said by Richard III :

Off with his head, and set it on York gates;
So York may overlook the town of York.

Before the glorious walls of this ancient city we see Queen Margaret welcoming her husband the King with a sight of York's head above the gate. It is a pathetic scene for Henry, who is snubbed for his sadness, ordered by his wife to create the Prince of Wales a knight, and then told by the new knight to draw his sword which he has put up after the ceremony, and to cry "Saint George!" in order to hearten the soldiers. When the opposing army leaders come for a parley, Henry is not allowed to speak, and has been told by Clifford that it would be best for him to withdraw, as the Queen's success seems to depend on his absence. The royal party, making York their headquarters, would be occupying the castle within the town. The great relic of the castle today is known as Clifford's Tower, and is a formidable-looking keep, with its almost perpendicular grass-covered slope on which it is perched. A wooden stairway makes it possible for visitors to

mount it who are not mountaineers. I confess to feeling very giddy whenever I have climbed those steps. But it is the Minster that really dominates the town. Dedicated to St. Peter, I suppose it is the finest Gothic church in England, famed for its stained glass, its West Front, its three magnificent towers, its bells and a wonderful chapter-house. Apart from these features, one should visit the Treasurer's House, the Library, and St. William's College. St. Peter's School claims to be the oldest school in England. It shares this distinction with the King's Schools of Canterbury and Rochester. From a Shakespearian point of view, it is well worth while to make a stay in York, and using it for headquarters visit the surrounding places mentioned in these plays. The Yorkists and Lancastrians had a picturesque background for this bickering that takes place in this prelude to the battle, which is the next scene.

A FIELD OF BATTLE BETWEEN TOWTON AND SAXTON IN YORKSHIRE.

Towton lies about twelve miles to the south-west of York. Saxton is nearly directly south some three miles from York, and between these points the armies met. Here we first see what looks like a general rout of the Yorkists, for Warwick, Edward, George, and Richard are seen at a last stand, with their ranks broke, and pursued by the enemy. After a quick consultation together, they take their farewells and return to rally their men. The next scene is short, but dramatic.

THE SAME. ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

Here we see Richard and Clifford face to face, with the former vowing vengeance for his father's and brother's murders. Clifford is equally eager to fight Richard, but on Warwick's entrance he flees, pursued by Richard, who tells Warwick to find some other quarry since he intends to hunt the wolf Clifford himself. Scene 5 interrupts the Richard-Clifford theme with the surprising sight of Henry wandering alone upon the battlefield. In a long soliloquy we learn that the battle is being hotly contested, first one side and then the other gaining advantage. The poor king sits down on a molehill, in a spirit of utter despair, though commending victory to God's will. The fact that he had been told that his presence brings bad luck, and absence, good, makes him wish that he were dead or able to change places with some homely swain. What different spirit though from the battle speeches of his father. And yet Shakespeare seems to understand both men perfectly, and has given a kind of family resemblance in this

speech and his father's speech the night before Agincourt. The argument is the same. The advantage of the peasant over the king. At the end of this speech of Henry's, Shakespeare has introduced two heartrending incidents one on top of the other. A son comes in dragging a dead body that he has killed and is about to rob, when he recognizes the face of his own father. This is followed by a father in similar circumstances. He has killed his son without knowing it. The grief of these two living men and Henry's comments on their heartbroken sorrow is an indictment against the folly of civil war. This is a scene for sabre-rattlers to read and think over.

Suddenly Queen Margaret, the Prince of Wales, and Exeter come flying for their lives, crying out to the King to mount and ride. The scene closes on the Lancastrians' defeat. The next and sixth scene of the act is

THE SAME.

Clifford enters wounded, and after a long dying speech, faints just as the victors enter, wondering whether he had escaped. Warwick is saying in front of Richard's face for compliment to his bravery that it is not possible for Clifford to have left the field since Richard had mark'd him for the grave, and it is then that the wretched man groans and dies. When Edward sends Richard to deal gently with the wounded man, whoever he be since the battle is won, Richard tells him to revoke his mercy since it is Clifford himself. Their hatred seems to chase him into the next world, and while his head is ordered to be placed on the gate of York, where he and Margaret placed the head of York, Edward confers the dukedom of Gloster upon Richard and that of Clarence upon George. It is a master stroke in his dealing with the character of Richard that Shakespeare here makes a point of Richard asking that he may be Clarence and George Gloster, since "*Gloster's dukedom is too ominous*". Warwick dismisses this as a foolish notion, and urges the way to London for the coronation.

The opening scene of the next act has the somewhat vague title of

A CHASE IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

I am including this in the Yorkshire scenes because it deals with the discovery of Henry VI, and his arrest in the name of King Edward. Actually, this arrest took place through betrayal while he was sitting at dinner in Waddington Hall, Yorkshire.

For some reason Henry had stolen across the border from Scotland, where he might have continued to live safely. It may have been, as Shakespeare makes him say, a journey of "*pure love to greet mine own land*" : or it may have been for one of the reasons given by Hall :

> whether he were past all fear, or was not well stablished in his perfect mind, or could not longer keep himself secret, in a disguised apparel boldly entered into England. He was no sooner entered but he was known and taken of one Cantlowe, and brought towards the king, whom the Earl of Warwick met on the way, by the king's commandment, and brought him through London to the Tower, and there he was laid in sure hold.

It is known that the royal wanderer lurked for some time in hiding amongst the moors of Westmoreland and Lancashire, till at last he journeyed on into Yorkshire, where he was recognized either by a Yorkist, or, as some affirm, by a monk. The last seems likely since Henry was ecclesiastically minded, and under discussion of his favourite topic, he may have talked too much and betrayed himself, or perhaps trusted one in a holy habit too far.

It was the servants of a Sir James Harrington who seized him as he dined at Waddington Hall, and these men carried him as far as Islington, where they were met by Warwick, to whom they handed him over for his imprisonment in the Tower.

In this scene Shakespeare makes Henry captured by two gamekeepers, who take him to officers of the crown.

The next Yorkshire scene is

A PARK NEAR MIDDLEHAM CASTLE IN YORKSHIRE.

The village of Middleham lies two miles south of Leyburn. Its famous ruined castle was in those days one of the strongest holdings of the Nevilles. In the days of this play it was occupied by the Archbishop of York, the Earl of Warwick's brother, and it was here that Edward was sent as a prisoner when the King-Maker had put Henry back on the throne. Shakespeare gives his rescue to Richard, the newly created Duke of Gloster, since he is still thinking of developing the character of Richard III as fully as possible for his audiences. Hall, still the chief source of the dramatist's information, since Holinshed, for this period, copied him most faithfully, has a different tale, from which Shakespeare takes the best.

All the king's doings were by espials declared to the Earl of Warwick, which, like a wise and politic captain, intending not to lose so great an advantage to him given, but trusting to bring all his purposes to a final end and determination by only obtaining this enterprise, in the dead of the night, with an elect company of men of war, as secretly as was possible, set on the king's field, killing them that kept the watch, and or the king were ware (for he thought of nothing less than of that chance that happened), at a place called Wolney, four miles from Warwick, he was taken prisoner and brought to the castle of Warwick. And to the intent that the king's friends might not know where he was, nor what was chanced of him, he caused him by secret journeys in the night to be conveyed to Middleham Castle in Yorkshire, and there to be kept under the custody of the Archbishop of York, his brother, and other his trusty friends, which entertained the king like his estate, and served him like a prince. But there was no place so far off but that the taking of the king was shortly known there with the wind, which news made many men to fear and greatly to dread, and many to wonder and lament the chance. King Edward, being thus in captivity, spake ever fair to the archbishop and to the other keepers; but, whether he corrupted them with money or fair promises, he had liberty divers days to go on hunting; and one day on a plain there met with him Sir William Stanley, Sir Thomas of Borogh, and divers other of his friends, with such a great band of men, that neither his keepers would, nor durst move him to return to prison again.

Shakespeare certainly makes the escape more dramatic by making Edward in the plot and purposely riding away from the hunt with but one keeper so that he could meet his brother and Stanley at a certain spot. Shakespeare, of course, brings him in on foot and makes Richard tell him that the horses are at the park corner. From here they rode to Lynn in order to take ship to Flanders.

BEFORE YORK.

Following the scene near Middleham Castle, Shakespeare introduced the scene in the Tower in order that the characters might know what the audience have seen, the escape of Edward, and now this, the seventh scene of the fourth act, brings us back to the gates of York, which is the end of the Yorkshire settings.

Here we see Edward and Richard demanding entry at the gate and the Mayor being told that Edward comes but as Duke of York, and a good friend to Henry. By this means he gets the keys of the city, and then proclaims himself King, by the advice of

Montgomery, who has joined them with an army. Edward's scruples as to keeping his word to the Mayor are easily overcome since he only wished to gain time and strength before declaring himself. Richard's remark to give him courage, "*Fearless minds climb soonest unto crowns*," is prophetic of his own future.

This completes the scenes in which Shakespeare bids us wander through our largest county.

Chapter Ten

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN STAFFORDSHIRE AND LEICESTERSHIRE

STAFFORDSHIRE has only one setting in Shakespeare's plays, and while it is a diminutive one, it proves that the dramatist had a sure knowledge of his localities. This one scene occurs in the last act of *King Richard III*, of which it is the second scene.

A PLAIN NEAR TAMWORTH.

This little market town lies, as the crows flies, from Leicester, twenty-five miles, and thirteen from Birmingham. It possesses a very fine parish church, a town hall, and a grammar school. The castle, perched on a sharp rise, was a stronghold of Mercia, the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, when Tamworth was one of the three principal towns, with Lichfield and Repton. A walled castle with a great square keep, to which were added several gabled wings. Today, Tamworth is chiefly concerned with farm produce. The gatehouse of the castle is now used as a museum. Important in English history, Tamworth's chief claim to fame is its connection with one of the most momentous battles fought in England, Bosworth Field, which changed the dynasty and gave us the Tudors. On to the plain near by marches the army of Richmond, on its way to encounter Richard at Leicester, which Shakespeare tells us is but one day's march from Tamworth. Henry Tudor is accompanied by the Earl of Oxford, Sir James Blunt, Sir Walter Herbert and others, and he is telling them that apart from the good fortune they have had in not having been attacked so far, he has heard from Lord Stanley of his support, and that Richard's friends will find opportunity of changing sides.

At this point and to the end Richard's plight is similar to that of Macbeth, while Richmond is the counterpart of Malcolm. Richard, like Macbeth, is deserted by friends who fight for the other side during the battle, and he is haunted by the ghosts of those he had murdered. Shakespeare naturally had to bring out the heroic quality in Richmond as a contrast to Richard.

From Shrewsbury, Richmond had marched to Lichfield, and

from thence to Tamworth, and so on to encamp for the night on Bosworth Field.

BOSWORTH FIELD.

This is a lengthy double-barrelled scene showing the opposing armies on opposite sides of the stage, and as played in the Elizabethan method needs careful stage management. With modern lighting and scenery, it is a simpler affair to keep the parties separate. Having read Hutton's description of the BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD, and studied the battle map in Nichols' *Leicestershire*, I own that I got a great thrill when I visited the locality the other day, and felt heartily ashamed that it was my first visit. I went from Leicester down to Hinckley and then back north again for Bosworth. This peaceful-looking little market town is the last spot in which one would think of battle, and yet the tower of its church is the most prominent landmark when one reaches the Field itself. I was told by the local landlord of the principal inn that the best place to make for, in order to be sure that one was on the Field, was King Richard's Well, and he gave me minute instructions as to which road to take and where to leave the car and climb gates into fields which would lead me to the Well. He showed me a snap which he had in his cigarette-case of an American lady who had come all the way from the far West just to see it, and he told me to be sure to look carefully for the Latin inscription which is carved in stone above the cover. On reaching the farther edge of the town, which is really little more than a village, I asked a policeman if I was heading right for King Richard's Well. Talking to the policeman was a man in his Sunday best complete with war medals, for it was Easter Sunday. He answered for the policeman: "Oh, you mean Old Nick's Well." I said: "Yes, and I turn there, don't I?" He looked angry as he shook his head. "Don't turn nowheres for nothing. Keep on to the gates: drive through 'em, and keep on till you can't go farther. Then get out and walk over the fields, and if you keep on walking you'll come to the Well, and can't miss it."

It sounded simple, so I drove on. The small boys of the place evidently do a good trade at the gates, which close each end of a lane, for they sit on the top bar waiting for motorists and pennies for opening up. On I drove till I found myself in a farmyard at the end of civilization, surrounded by pasture land. I asked a woman at the farm window who was eyeing me with curiosity the way to the Well, and she pointed vaguely and said, "You know, it's just where our Herbert works." She then shut the

window, so I left the car and began to climb the first of many five-barred gates in the hope of finding the Well and "where our Herbert works", and, incidentally, the bloody battlefield of worth, which by this time was beginning to live up to its adjective since I had planned to eat a picnic lunch on the Field, and it was now three in the afternoon. But I had yet to reckon with a feature of that locality which Richmond used to his advantage in the setting of his battle array, and that is the morass which stretches from the River Tweed to Richard's Well. The ground was very boggy on the way over the hill, from the top of which I got my first sight of the Well, which is built like a small pyramid. It had been fenced round, but people had broken away many of the posts in order to use the wood as a bridge across the bog. One side of the pyramid forms a doorway, and beneath it is the water of the well, full to the ground surface. As to the Latin inscription carved on the lintel, well, so many visitors have thought it more historically interesting to carve their own initials over it that very little can be plainly read of the original. However, the really interesting factor is that Richard is supposed to have drunk from this well before the fight.

For this great scene of battle, Shakespeare is once more indebted to Hall, though it is highly probable that the dramatist would have visited the Field himself, and gazed from the high ground where the opposing armies finally ranked, towards the church of Bosworth on the skyline. Hall's narrative is so graphic that it is well worth while to compare it with Shakespeare's text.

> In the mean season King Richard (which was appointed now to finish his last labour by the divine justice and providence of God, which called him to condign punishment for his scelerate merits and mischievous deserts) marched to a place meet for two battles to encounter, by a village called Bosworth, not far from Leicester, and there he pitched his field, refreshed his soldiers, and took his rest. The fame went that he had the same night a dreadful and a terrible dream; for it seemed to him, being asleep, that he saw divers images like terrible devils, which pulled and hauled him, not suffering him to take any quiet or rest. The which strange vision not so suddenly strake his heart with a sudden fear, but it stuffed his head and troubled his mind with many dreadful and busy imaginations; for incontinent after, his heart being almost damped, he prognosticated before the doubtful chance of the battle to come, not using the alacrity and mirth of mind and of countenance, as he was accustomed to do before he came toward the battle. And lest that it might be suspected that he was abashed for fear of his

GIRLS CO

enemies, and for that cause looked so piteously, he recited and declared to his familiar friends in the morning his wonderful vision and terrible dream.

Hall goes on to describe the battle itself:

He had scantly finished his saying but the one army espied the other. Lord! how hastily the soldiers buckled their helms! how quickly the archers bent their bows and frushed their feathers! how readily the billmen shook their bills and proved their staves! ready to approach and join when the terrible trumpet should sound the bloody blast to victory or death. Between both armies there was a great morass, which the Earl of Richmond left on his right hand, for this intent, that it should be on that side a defence for his part; and in so doing he had the sun at his back and in the face of his enemies. When King Richard saw the earl's company was passed the morass, he commanded with all haste to set upon them; and the king's archers courageously let fly their arrows: the earl's bowmen stood not still, but paid them home again. The terrible shot once passed, the armies joined and came to hand-strokes, where neither sword nor bill was spared; at which encounter the Lord Stanley joined with the earl. The Earl of Oxford in the mean season, fearing lest while his company was fighting they should be compassed and circumvented with the multitude of his enemies, gave commandment to every rank that no man should be so hardy as go above ten feet from the standard; which commandment once known, they knit themselves together, and ceased a little from fighting. The adversaries, suddenly abashed at the matter, and mistrusting some fraud or deceit, began also to pause, and left striking, and not against the wills of many, which had liefer had the king destroyed than saved, and therefore they fought very faintly or stood still. The Earl of Oxford, bringing all his band together on the one part, set on his enemies freshly. Again, the adversaries perceiving that, placed their men slender and thin before, and thick and broad behind, beginning again hardily the battle. While the two forwards thus mortally fought, each intending to vanquish and convince the other, King Richard was admonished by his explorators and espials that the Earl of Richmond, accompanied with a small number of men of arms, was not far off; and as he approached and marched toward him, he perfectly knew his personage by certain demonstrations and token he had learnt and known of other; and being inflamed with ire and vexed with outrageous malice, he put his spurs to his horse, and rode out of the side of the range of his battle, leaving the avant-gardes fighting, and like a hungry lion ran with spear in rest toward him. The Earl of Richmond perceived well the king furiously coming toward him, and, by cause the whole hope of his wealth and purpose was to be

> determined by battle, he gladly proffered to encounter with him body to body and man to man. King Richard set on so sharply at the first brunt that he overthrew the earl's standard and slew Sir William Brandon, his standard-bearer (which was father to Sir Charles Brandon, by King Henry the Eighth created Duke of Suffolk) and matched hand to hand with Sir John Cheinye, a man of great force and strength, which would have resisted him, and the said John was by him manfully overthrown, and so he making open passage by dint of sword as he went forward, the Earl of Richmond withstood his violence and kept him at the sword's point without advantage longer than his companions other thought or judged; which, being almost in despair of victory, were suddenly recomforted by Sir William Stanley, which came to succours with iii thousand tall men, at which very instant King Richard's men were driven back and fled, and he himself, manfully fighting in the middle of his enemies, was slain and brought to his death as he worthily had deserved.

Shakespeare divides Bosworth Field into the third and fourth scenes of the act, keeping the tent episodes in the third, and the battle proper in the fourth.

On the Elizabethan stage the ghosts appear between the two tents, thus saving them a ghostly walk. And what a galaxy of ghosts: eleven in all. After both commanders have given their battle orations in this scene Shakespeare takes us to

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

Here we see Richard crying out his famous line:

> A horse! A horse! my kingdom for a horse,

which he repeats for his final line. Actually the King was dragged from White Surrey's saddle and slain.

From the actor's point of view this play is great theatre, in which Richard is the play, and one of the most magnificent parts the dramatist wrote. Audiences love the character for his wicked audacity, his grim humour, and colossal hypocrisy. How Shakespeare must have enjoyed building this part. The others don't matter very much, but he matters all the time, and we really don't mind whom he murders so long as he gets on with it in his own jocular fashion.

LEICESTER in its North-gate Street possessed an inn called the *Blue Boar*, in which Richard slept before riding to Bosworth. The adjoining street to this large half-timber house derived its

name of Blubbery Lane from the inn's title. A curious relic was left by Richard in his room in the shape of a great bedstead of wood and gilt. For two hundred years it stopped there after the Battle of Bosworth. Knight describes it as having a wooden bottom and under that a false one, of the same materials, like a floor and its under ceiling.

> Between these two bottoms [he says] was concealed a quantity of gold coin, worth about 300 pounds of our present money, but then worth many times that sum. Thus he personally watched his treasure, and slept on his military chest.

It is quite possible that Leicester figures as the first scene in *King Lear*, which is titled

A ROOM OF STATE IN KING LEAR'S PALACE.

The historic Period of this play is Mythical, 841–791 B.C. Lear was the son of Baldud, and as Holinshed says, was ruler over the Britons

> in the year of the world 3105, at what time Joas reigned as yet in Juda. This Leir [Holinshed's spelling] was a prince of right noble demeanour, governing his land and subjects in great wealth. He made the town of Caerlier now called Leicester, which standeth upon the river Sore.

Shakespeare does not give Leicester as the locality, but since Leir or Lear built Leicester, he would have built there a palace for himself. It is the only scene in the play that is placed in the royal palace, and it sets the theme of the play, the behaviour of the three daughters of the King. Cordelia, the youngest and Lear's favourite, by refusing to flatter the King like her insincere sisters, loses her share of the kingdom, while the protesting Earl of Kent is banished, and the King of France, unlike the fickle Duke of Burgundy, gladly makes Cordelia his queen, in spite of the infuriated Lear.

King Lear was first played at Whitehall, in the presence of King James, on December the twenty-sixth 1606. An earlier play of Lear or Leir had been produced, probably at the Rose Theatre, but the entry in the Stationers' Register under Nathaniel Butter and John Busby, dated November the 26th 1607, says:

> Entred for their copie under th(e) (h)andes of Sir George Buck Knight and th(e) wardens A booke called Master William Shake-

speare his "history of Kinge Lear" as yt was played before the kinges maiestie at Whitehall vppon Saincy Stephens night at Christmas last by his maiesties servantes playinge vsually at the "Globe" on the Banksyde.

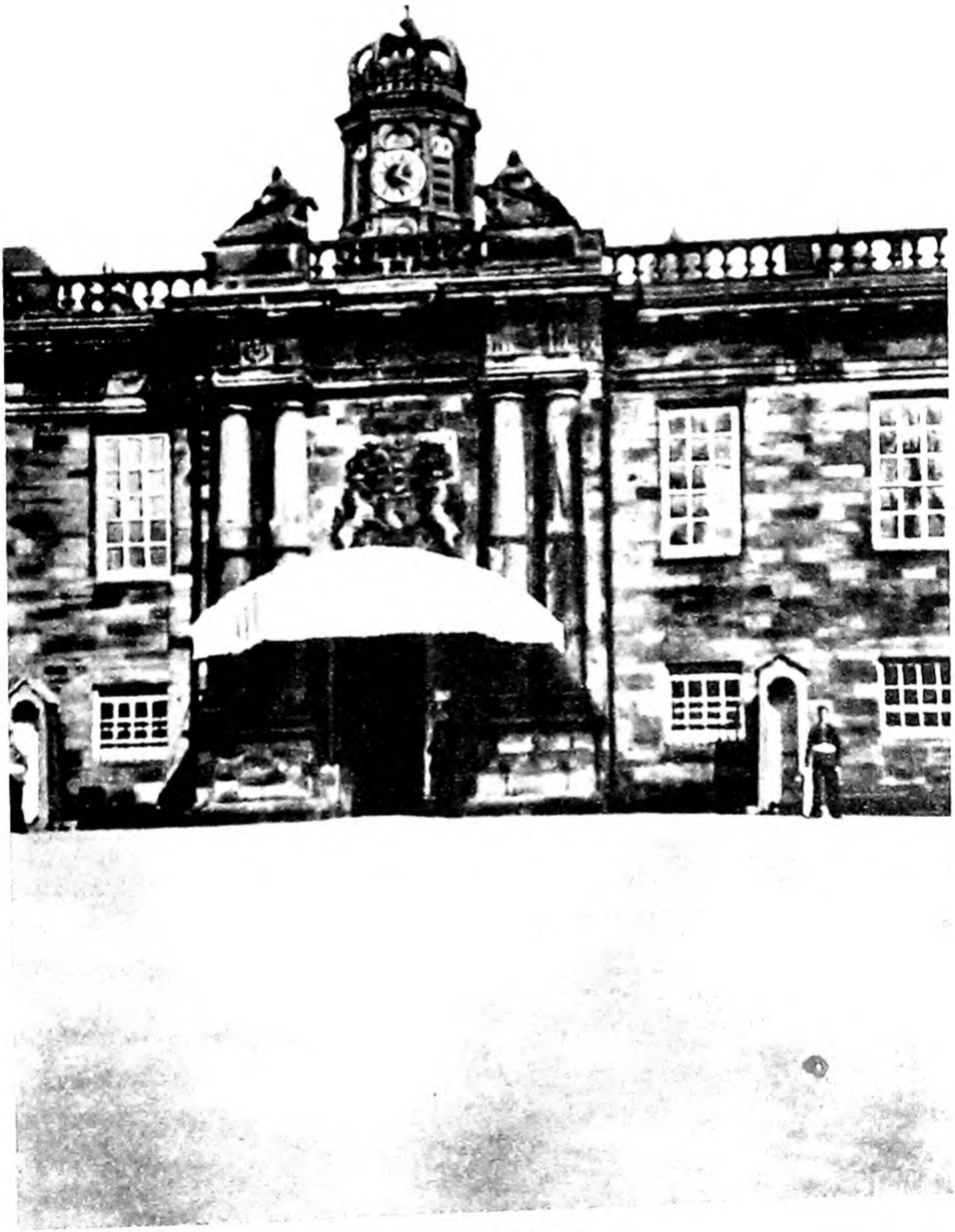
There are no more scenes laid in the county of Leicester.

Although Leicester City is not used as a stage setting by Shakespeare, he gives it a very beautiful scene in description which occurs in the Kimbolton Scene in *Henry VIII.* Griffiths tells Queen Katharine the news of Cardinal Wolsey's end, and anyone who visits Leicester in Shakespeare's steps will think of the death of this great character. It is interesting to compare Griffith's account with that of Cavendish, who gives it as follows:

> And the next day he took his journey with Master Kingston and the guard. And as soon as they espied their old master in such a lamentable estate, they lamented him with weeping eyes, whom my lord took by the hands and divers times by the way, as he rode, he would talk with them, sometime with one, and sometime with another. At night he was lodged at a house of the Earl of Shrewsbury's, called Hardwick Hall, very ill at ease. The next day he rode to Nottingham and there lodged that night, more sicker, and the next day we rode to Leicester Abbey; and by the way he waxed so sick that he was divers times likely to have fallen from his mule; and being night before we came to the Abbey of Leicester, where, at his coming in at the gates, the abbot of the place, with all his convent, met him with the light of many torches; whom they right honourably received with great reverence. To whom my lord said, "Father Abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you": whom they brought on his mule to the stairs' foot of his chamber, and there alighted; and Master Kingston then took him by the arm and led him up the stairs, who told me afterwards that he never carried so heavy a burden in all his life. And as soon as he was in his chamber, he went incontinent to his bed, very sick. This was upon Saturday at night; and there he continued sicker and sicker. Upon Monday in the morning, as I stood by his bedside, about eight of the clock, the windows being close shut, having wax-lights burning upon the cupboard, I beheld him, as me seemed, drawing fast to his end. He perceiving my shadow upon the wall by his bedside, asked who was there? "Sir, I am here," quoth I. "How do you?" quoth he to me. "Very well, sir," quoth I, "if I might see your grace well." "What is it of the clock?" said he to me. "Forsooth, sir," said I, "it is past eight of the clock in the morning." "Eight of the clock?" quoth he; "that cannot be": rehearsing divers times "eight of the clock"—"eight of the clock"—"nay,

> nay," quoth he at the last, "it cannot be eight of the clock, for by eight of the clock ye shall lose your master, for my time draweth near that I must depart out of this world."

Like Cavendish, Shakespeare tells the story to us with the same simplicity. No more moving scene has ever happened within the city of Leicester, and I felt that mention should be made of it, in going there in Shakespeare's mind.



HOLYROOD PALACE

INVERNESS, FLORA MACDONALD.
(THE CASTLE REBUILT WHERE MACBETH KILLED DUNCAN)

Chapter Eleven

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN SHROPSHIRE AND HEREFORD

SHROPSHIRE owns one series of scenes in Shakespeare and that is the camp and battle scenes in the fourth and fifth acts of *Henry IV*, Part One. The great battle of Shrewsbury was fought three miles from the city walls to the north at a place called Hatley Field. It is quite easy to find because there is a large notice-board at the side of the main road showing the way to the Battle-field, and one can drive along till the lane stops at a farm and then get over a gate and walk. I found Hatley Field in the possession of flocks of sheep, which my imagination tried to turn into armoured knights. I saw before me a plain, with a range of foot-hills rising in the direction of the Welsh border. To the east may be seen Haughmond Hill, which King Henry describes as "*yon bosky hill*". Bosky or busky means woody. On the plain, an emblem of the peace which now pervades that lovely scene, stands the remains of Henry's thanksgiving to God for victory in the shape of a chantry which he caused to be built and endowed for Masses to be chanted for the souls of all the brave men who had died upon that hard-fought field. This Battle of Shrewsbury was the first great fight in which Prince Hal took part. He had been on the Welsh borders and joined his father's army before the King entered Shrewsbury on the 20th of July. The battle was fought the following day. This was in the year 1403. Hotspur, who had marched through Lancashire and Cheshire proclaiming that Richard was alive, had been joined by the Douglas and his Scots, and by his uncle, the Earl of Worcester, commanding a strong body of Cheshire archers. Glendower was on the march from Wales, but the rapidity of Henry's advance prevented this help from reaching Hotspur in time, while his own father stayed in Warkworth, with the excuse of sickness. From under the walls of Shrewsbury, Hotspur retired to Hatley, sending defiance to the King the night before the battle. Shakespeare first takes us to

The Rebel Camp, near Shrewsbury.

This is the first scene of the fourth act, and here we find Hotspur receiving the excuses of his father by letter, and then Sir Richard Vernon enters with the news that Glendower cannot

join them for a fortnight, and that the Earl of Westmoreland with Prince John had joined the King and the Prince of Wales, making in all an army of some thirty thousand. But this frosty tidings only determines Hotspur and the Douglas to join battle.

THE REBEL CAMP, NEAR SHREWSBURY.

This is also the third scene of the act, and shows us Hotspur urging his fellow commanders to fight that night, but he is overruled. Sir Walter Blunt arrives under flag of truce with offers from the King of righting any wrongs that exist between him and the Percys. Hotspur answers in full of all his wrongs, saying that his uncle will return his answer in full after a consultation.

THE KING'S CAMP, NEAR SHREWSBURY.

This opens the last act with the King and the Princes receiving the Earl of Worcester and Vernon. It is noticeable that Shakespeare does not lose any opportunity of popularizing the character of his favourite English hero, Prince Hal. Vernon has described him to Hotspur in the most glowing terms of admiration, and now the Prince shows his admiration for Hotspur, in a modest speech to Worcester, which cannot fail to commend itself to an audience. Hotspur is already dear to their hearts, and Shakespeare needed all his skill not to disappoint them in his death. In a word, he has two heroes, one very firmly established, who has to be supplanted by the other. By Hal praising Hotspur, the audience automatically praise Hal.

This scene closes with one of Shakespeare's rarest gems, which is Falstaff catechizing himself upon the word HONOUR. This is Falstaff at his best, and therefore Shakespeare at his best.

THE REBEL CAMP.

This is the next scene, and shows us the historical fact that this battle might have been prevented, and probably would have been, had the Earl of Worcester told his nephew Hotspur the full mind and offer of the King. But he persuades Vernon against this, and so a sharp defiance is given by the Douglas. Shakespeare has taken this directly from Holinshed, who says:

> It was reported for a truth, that now when the king had condescended unto all that was reasonable at his hands to be required, and seemed to humble himself more than was meet for his estate, the Earl of Worcester (upon his return to his nephew) made relation clean contrary to that the king had said, in such sort that he

> set his nephew's heart more in displeasure towards the king, than ever it was before, driving him to fight whether he would or not: then suddenly blew the trumpets, the king's part crying "St. George upon them," the adversaries cried "Esperance Percy," and so the two armies furiously joined.

The battle opened with a storm of arrows from the Northumbrian archers, and to quote Walsingham's *Brevis Historia*, the King's men "*fell as the leaves fall on the ground after a frosty night at the approach of winter*". Following this slaughtering rain of arrows, one of which wounded the Prince of Wales in the face, the royal troops were driven back before the furious charge of Hotspur and the Douglas.

THE FIELD OF BATTLE, NEAR SHREWSBURY.

Shakespeare follows the accounts of Hall and Holinshed. Although the King went into the heart of the battle, fighting courageously, and confronted the Douglas, he had taken the precaution of dressing several of his personal bodyguard in his own habit, which caused the death of his standard-bearer, Sir Walter Blunt, and three others, while the King himself was unhorsed. The Douglas slew the others and might have killed the King too, had not the Prince, who had refused to leave the fight because of his wounded face, rescued him. This scene, which is titled by some editors, *Between the Camps*, and *Plain near Shrewsbury*, shows us Falstaff regarding the dead body of Sir Walter Blunt, and not liking the grinning honour on his face. It is the next scene, however, which holds the excitement for the audience. We see the Prince of Wales rescue his father from the fury of the Douglas and put him to flight, and then when the King has parted from him, Hotspur enters. History tells us that Hotspur died from an arrow piercing his brain, but there seems to be some uncertainty about it, so that Shakespeare is quite justified in his personal encounter between the two famous Harrys. But only Shakespeare would have dared to distract the attention of the audience from this great climax by a piece of glorious fooling.

Falstaff enters and is encouraging the Prince when he is suddenly confronted himself by the terrible Douglas. What a situation! The best beloved clown of the Elizabethan stage forced to fight the most ferocious soldier of the day. But the strength of the Douglas is no match for the cunning of the fat clown, who falls down and pretends to be dead. Then comes the magnificent end of Hotspur, though why the Douglas goes off and leaves him

to it I have never been able to understand, unless in the Elizabethan method the two Harrys carried their fight into the wings or on to the upper stage. The Prince's speech over the dead Hotspur is very moving, but not so moving as his "*Poor Jack, farewell*", had the rogue really been dead. Falstaff's speech after the Prince leaves him for dead is colossal, and his glorious lie of how he and Hotspur rose "*both at an instant and fought a long hour by Shrewsbury clock*" is on a par with his account of the men in buckram suits. The Prince once more shows his generosity in promising Falstaff to gild his amusing lie with happiest terms to do him good, and the results of the battle are told in the next and last scene.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

This is sometimes titled "*King Henry's Tent*", which is the probable locality, and it shows Worcester and Sir Richard Vernon with other prisoners being sent to their death, which occurred at the market-cross of Shrewsbury. The Prince of Wales tells the King that the Douglas, on hearing that Hotspur was dead, and seeing his followers fly in consequence, fled himself, but falling from a hill, was himself captured and taken to the Prince's tent. He asks for the disposal of him, and this being granted, sends his brother John of Lancaster to give the Douglas his freedom without ransom, as his tribute to the Scot's bravery. Thus ends the great adventure of Hatley Field near Shrewsbury. The actual numbers engaged in this titanic struggle were not so great as Shakespeare states, since there were less than thirty thousand men in all, and fourteen thousand from both armies were either killed or wounded, nearly half the number arrayed.

The town of Shrewsbury, which was the background of the battle, is one of the most interesting in England. On the Severn River, this beautiful old town has many fine buildings. The castle, the Abbey Church, the old market-house and the famous school founded by Edward VI, in 1552, whose star pupils were Sir Philip Sidney and the notorious Judge Jeffreys.

Although HEREFORD is such a familiar name in Shakespeare, there is no scene laid in that city so full of history and only one scene laid in the county, and that is Mortimer's Cross, where the Earl of March, afterwards Edward IV, gained a very complete victory over the Welsh and Irish under Jasper Tudor, half-brother to Henry VI. Thirty-six hundred of Edward's enemies were left on the field, and Owen Tudor, second husband of Catherine of France, was beheaded at Hereford with eight prominent Lancastrians as a retaliation for the Queen's executions in Yorkshire.

Owen Tudor's son, Jasper, had the good luck to escape from the battle. Shakespeare does not touch on the battle because he uses the Battle of Towton in this act, but he uses the incident of the three suns which were supposed to have been seen merged into one sun, and to inspire Edward, not only to take the field, but to bear the rising suns upon his target. Hence the opening line of *Richard III*;

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York.

Shakespeare places the scene as A PLAIN NEAR MORTIMER'S CROSS IN HEREFORDSHIRE.

The scene does not advance the action of the play, and is only used so that Edward and Richard may be told the news of their father's death. Warwick joins them and they set out to York to confront the Queen's forces. Historically, Edward heard the news of his father's death while gathering forces at Gloucester. In the Quarto there is a stage direction concerning the three suns, which says, "*Three sunnes appear in the aire.*" By this it seems that some sort of stage device was used so as to be visible to the audience. This phenomenon of mock suns has been recorded as having occurred in England occasionally, and frequently in the Alps, in Greenland, and in the Andes.

According to Hall, the battle of Mortimer's Cross was fought in a fair plain not far from Hereford east. Had Shakespeare used this battle in the play, the Towton fight would have become tedious. As always, he thought first of the play and what would hold the audience.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN WARWICKSHIRE

THERE are three localities used as scenes in this county, although it gave the poet more inspiration than any other county. The Forest of Arden, and the woods near Athens, are in spirit Shakespeare's home woods. But we are following the scenes as they appear in the plays, and therefore Warwickshire only shows us Coventry, Kenilworth, and Near Warwick.

Coventry appears first upon St. Lambert's Day as the third scene of the first act in *Richard II.* It is titled:

OPEN SPACE, NEAR COVENTRY. LISTS SET OUT, AND A THRONE.

My first thought on visiting Coventry was to find the spot where these famous Lists were set out. The centre of every city is its cathedral, so I mounted the hill to St. Michael's, because one can always depend upon sound local information from a cathedral verger. My informant, however, was a priest, who told me that the most learned historian and antiquary in Coventry was a Mr. Shelton, Curator of the Benedictine Museum in Little Park Street. So to him I went. It was the happiest little place, situated in a back yard. A long shed-like building filled with relics dug up in the city. It was obvious that the Curator was a passionate lover of his city and of its history, and he told me with enthusiasm that he hoped some time to move the collection to larger premises. On the south bank of the stream called the Sherbourne there had originally stood a small nunnery. It was founded by its first abbess, St. Osburg, who is said to have been buried in Coventry, and attracted to her shrine many sick who were cured. The ravages of the Danes in 1016 fell upon the nunnery, and this is where the famous Lady Godiva came in. Not only did she make her husband, Earl Leofric of Mercia, build a monastery on the site, but by riding naked through the city she caused her husband to remove the heavy taxation from the poor. Unfortunately, after this lady's death, Bishop Limisie, who was the first to hold the See of Coventry, robbed the Benedictines of their wealth. Their church was then the richest in the world, so it has been stated, which may be believed when we hear that the ecclesiastical robber scraped 500 marks worth of silver from one beam

alone. The Curator knew all about the Lists of Coventry, and directed me towards a place called Gosford Green, telling me to look out for the King's Road, which led to the entrance of what is now a recreation park. Along the road King Richard had proceeded to the Lists. I found King Richard's road, which is now a street of little modern houses. Like so many towns whose population has increased beyond the ancient boundaries, history can be read in the names of the streets of this description. The park was full of children, nursemaids, and prams. The scene in no way suggested the magnificence of Richard's Lists. Insignificant houses and a high railway embankment were not at all in keeping. Only the flower-beds seem to commemorate that spectacle of colour. One other thing, though, erected by the authorities, is a little monument of stone with the following inscription upon a bronze plate let into its face:

> Near this spot in the reign of Richard II in September 1398 (Sept. 1397 according to local history) a wage of battle was to have been fought between the Duke of Hereford (afterwards Henry IV) and Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. Hereford had imputed treasonable utterance to Mowbray, who demanded the privilege of acquitting himself by single combat. The King consented, and came to Coventry in great state to preside. But when the combatants presented themselves on the field, His Majesty stopped the encounter and pronounced decrees of banishment. Hereford for ten years (afterwards remitting four years) and Mowbray for life.

After copying down this inscription, I sat down with the notes I had copied from Holinshed, read them carefully, and then, while trying to turn slow-moving perambulators into spirited chargers, I mentally repeated the dialogue from the play. The railway with its screeching trains disappeared, and so did the suburban-looking houses, because of the magic in Holinshed and Shakespeare. It must be remembered that the Duke of Norfolk was in the ordinary way Earl Marshal, but since he had to answer Hereford's appeal, his office was given that day to a deputy, Thomas Holland, Earl of Surrey. The Duke of Aumerle was the High Constable of England.

Holinshed's account, from which Shakespeare took material, must be read fully to appreciate this great scene in the play;

> The Duke of Aumerle, that day, being high constable of England, and the Duke of Surrey, marshal, placed themselves between them, well armed and appointed; and when they saw their time, they first

entered into the lists with a great company of men apparelled in silk, sendall, embroidered with silver, both richly and curiously, every man having a tipped staff to keep the field in order. About the hour of prime came to the barriers of the lists, the Duke of Hereford, mounted on a white courser barded with green and blue velvet, embroidered, sumptuously with swans and antelopes of goldsmith's work, armed at all points. The constable and marshal came to the barriers, demanding of him what he was, he answered "I am Henry of Lancaster, Duke of Hereford, which am come hither to do mine endeavour against Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, as a traitor untrue to God, the king, his realm, and me." Then, incontinently, he sware upon the holy evangelists that his quarrel was true and just, and upon that point he required to enter the lists. Then he put by his sword, which before he held naked in his hand, and, putting down his visor, made a cross on his horse, and with spear in hand, entered into the lists, and descended from his horse, and set him down in a chair of green velvet, at the one end of the lists, and there reposed himself, abiding the coming of his adversary.

Soon after him, entered into the field with great triumph, King Richard, accompanied with all the peers of the realm, and in his company was the Earl of St. Paul, which was come out of France in post to see this challenge performed. The king had there above ten thousand men in armour, lest some fray or tumult might rise amongst his nobles, by quarrelling or partaking. When the king was set in his seat, which was richly hanged and adorned, a king-at-arms made open proclamation, prohibiting all men, in the name of the king, and of the high constable and marshal, to enterprise or attempt to approach, or touch any part of the lists on pain of death, except such as were appointed to order or marshal the field. The proclamation ended, another herald cried: "Behold here Henry of Lancaster Duke of Hereford appellant, which is entered into the lists rival to do his devoir against Thomas Mowbray Duke of Norfolk defendant, upon pain to be found false and recreant."

The Duke of Norfolk hovered on horseback at the entrance of the lists, his horse being barded with crimson velvet, embroidered richly with lions of silver and mulberry trees; and when he had made his oath before the constable and marshal that his quarrel was just and true, he entered the field manfully, saying aloud: "God aid him that hath the right," and then he departed from his horse, and sate him down in his chair, which was of crimson velvet, curtained about with white and red damask. The lord marshal viewed their spears, to see that they were of equal length, and delivered the one spear himself to the Duke of Hereford, and sent the other unto the Duke of Norfolk by a knight. Then the herald proclaimed that the traverses and chairs of the champions should be removed, commanding them on the king's behalf to mount on horseback, and address themselves to the battle and combat.

The Duke of Hereford was quickly horsed, and closed his beaver, and cast his spear into the rest, and when the trumpet sounded, set forward courageously towards his enemy, six or seven paces. The Duke of Norfolk was not fully set forward, when the king cast down his warder, and the heralds cried, "Ho, ho!"

Then the king caused their spears to be taken from them, and commanded them to repair again to their chairs, where they remained two long hours, while the king and his council deliberately consulted, what order was best to be had in so weighty a cause.

The King's sentences were the same as Shakespeare gives them in the play, but the remission of four years to Hereford did not take place in Coventry but when Hereford came to take farewell of the King at Eltham. Froissart, in the greatest historical work of that period, gives us the King's address to his cousin on that occasion.

As God help me, it right greatly displeaseth me the words that have been between you and the earl marshal; but the sentence that I have given is for the best, and for to appease thereby the people, who greatly murmured on this matter; wherefore, cousin, yet to ease you somewhat of your pain, I release my judgment from ten year to six year. Cousin, take this aworth, and ordain you thereafter.

The earl answered and said: "Sir, I thank your grace, and when it shall please you, ye shall do me more grace."

Some editors give the next scene of this play as COVENTRY, A ROOM IN THE KING'S CASTLE, but it is commonly given to London, and we have already given it description under that title.

The next Coventry scene then appears in the fourth act of *Henry IV*, Part One, and it is the second scene.

A PUBLIC ROAD NEAR COVENTRY.

Here to the tune of drums and fife, we see Falstaff at the head of his ragged regiment on the way through Coventry to Sutton Coldfield of Warwickshire, which lies about twenty-five miles north-west of the city, on the Tamworth road. Falstaff, as usual, is thirsty and sends Bardolph on into Coventry to fill him a bottle of sack. Falstaff was in funds. He had been given money from the King's purse to enrol his men, and he picked first only those

who would for various reasons buy out their services. A mad fellow whom he meets on the march, looking at the wicked specimens that had taken the places of these that had bought themselves out, suggests that Falstaff has unloaded the gibbets and pressed the dead bodies. Falstaff owns that he will not be seen marching with them through Coventry. His long speech about them is well up to the standard of Falstaffian wit. The Prince of Wales and the Earl of Westmoreland order him to hasten on towards Shrewsbury where the King is encamped.

The next scene that is laid in Warwickshire occurs in the fourth act of the *Second Part* of *Henry VI*, and is the ninth scene.

KENILWORTH CASTLE.

Shakespeare must have known it well, and probably acted there, but we must own that this scene does not do justice to such a famed place. It is a short scene of little consequence and no action. It takes place on the terrace of the Castle. It shows King Henry dismissing the prisoners taken in the Cade rebellion with free pardon. Then a messenger brings news of the Duke of York's arrival in arms to demand the removal from Court of the Duke of Somerset. Henry immediately agrees to send the Duke to the Tower, telling Somerset, who is present, and perfectly willing to be sacrificed for his country, that it is only a gesture to make York dismiss his troops. It has been pointed out over this incident that Henry in many ways resembles Charles I. Both had admirable qualities, but a readiness to desert a friend if necessary.

Certainly Kenilworth will not be remembered for this scene. When I went over those ruins some time ago, the guide had much to say about Sir Walter Scott's novel, but nothing of this scene. His great hero appears to be John of Gaunt, who improved the castle work of Simon de Montfort and Henry III. There is no doubt but that it is Scott's novel which has popularized this majestic ruin, which before being battered by the Commonwealth was one of the largest and most important castles in England. When Queen Elizabeth visited the Earl of Leicester in 1575, Shakespeare was a boy of eleven, and since Stratford-on-Avon is only some twelve miles from Kenilworth, we may be sure that somehow he managed to get over there to witness the pageants and plays which, in honour of the royal guest, were open to the countryside. We have already pointed out in the London scene which is the fourth of this act that Kenilworth was then called and pro-

nounced locally Killingworth, which some editors prefer to title it. Hall tells us that the King

> departed in all haste to the castell of Kylyngworthe in Warwyckeshyre, leauyng only behynd him ye lord Scales, to kepe the Towre of London.

For our next scene we must go only four and a half miles to Warwick, in order to see the Kingmaker with the Earl of Oxford welcoming Clarence and Somerset. Although the scene is titled A PLAIN IN WARWICKSHIRE, we may take it that it is in the vicinity of Warwick's castle, when he tells them that he is going to capture Edward who is encamped carelessly with but a single guard, as his soldiers have been allowed to lurk in the nearby towns. Shakespeare does not write a scene actually in Warwick, though he must have known the castle well, and all Shakespearian lovers should visit it, as it has his true flavour. The Leicester hospital or military almshouse is one of the finest in the country, and dates from the fourteenth century. Its beautiful chapel, by the gatehouse, and its old refectory are well worth seeing, and the courtyard reminds one of an old-world college. There are two town gates still standing, each with a chapel. The fourteenth-century castle, the seat of the Earl of Warwick, is one of the most perfect existing specimens of its age, and contains a wonderful collection of art treasures. Viewed from the bridge one is glad that such a lovely building is still an inhabited castle. St. Mary's Church. with its lofty tower and Beauchamp Chapel filled with famous tombs, is worth a visit just to listen to its verger telling Warwick's story. He had a good sense of humour which many vergers lack. He told me a good story of an American husband and wife who were being shown a ducking-stool which is preserved in the crypt. He explained to them that it was used for shrewish wives as a punishment for having too much to say about their husbands, and the wife remarked to her husband, "If we had that thing in America I know several women who'd get it in our home-town." To which the husband replied dryly, "Well, I guess you'd have to live in your swim-suit."

I liked him for telling a story like that in the sad and solemn crypt.

EDWARD'S CAMP NEAR WARWICK.

This was pitched four miles from Warwick at a place called Wolney or Olney. It follows the scene on the Plain, and shows Warwick's plot being put into execution. The watchmen outside

Edward's tent are surprised and driven off. Richard and Hastings manage to escape, but Edward is taken prisoner, and uncrowned by the Kingmaker, who has him conveyed to his brother, the Archbishop of York.

BEFORE THE GATES OF COVENTRY.

This, the opening scene of the last act of *Henry VI*, Part III, is the last of the Warwickshire settings.

Warwick and the Mayor of Coventry are above, upon the wall, and a messenger tells the Kingmaker that Oxford is marching to his aid from Dunsmore. Dunsmore, or Dunsmere, is a heath between Coventry and Daventry, and on its north-west runs the old Roman road called the Fosse Way, which terminates at Seaton in South Devon. A second messenger tells him that his brother Montague has reached Daintry, which is the old spelling of Daventry. Then Sir John Somerville arrives to tell him that Clarence is on his way, but at that moment drums are heard, and Warwick is surprised to find Edward and Gloster at the head of a strong force, who demand entry to the city. But Warwick has changed sides, and is for King Henry, so refuses to allow Edward through the gates. But on Oxford's arrival, Edward sees him admitted in the name of Lancaster. The discomfited Edward then witnesses the arrival of two more Lancastrian parties, under Montague and Somerset, and then to his further grief sees Clarence appear with the red rose of Lancaster in his hat, and being welcomed from the walls by Warwick. But Gloster is a match for the Kingmaker, and for Clarence too. He goes to his crafty brother and whispers. His persuasive tongue works the miracle of making Clarence pluck the red rose from his hat, to show Warwick that he too can change sides. This breaking away from the Kingmaker delights his brothers, who both welcome him, while the enraged Warwick calls him "perjur'd", an adjective that has always been coupled with Clarence, and which he hears twice when dreaming of the life to come, when a prisoner in the Tower. The ghost of Warwick appears to him as he thinks he is passing into the kingdom of perpetual night, crying out:

> What scourge for perjury
> Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?

And again, the Prince of Wales, with his bright hair dabbled in blood, shrieks out:

Clarence is come,—false, fleeting, perjur'd Clarence,
That stabb'd me in the field by Tewkesbury;
Seize on him! Furies, take him unto torment.

This was the last dream of Clarence before being murdered, and can be found in the last scene of the first act in *Richard III.* The scene at Coventry ends with both parties defying each other, and accepting challenge to meet in battle at Barnet.

Chapter Thirteen

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN NORTHAMPTON AND HUNTINGDON

NORTHAMPTON, the county town of Northamptonshire, is the only place that figures in this county as a setting for Shakespearian scenes. The scenes all occur in the play of *King John*. Although an ancient town in which the Templars built the round church of St. Sepulchre's, all that remains of the castle is a wall. But it was here that King John held his Court, and it figures in the opening scene of the play under the title

NORTHAMPTON. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE PALACE.

The play opens with the King sending through Chatillon, the ambassador, a sharp defiance to France. Then there enters one of the most popular of Shakespeare's heroes, Philip Faulconbridge, who has come to Court with his younger brother, Robert, in order that the King may settle a dispute about the family estate. Robert wins the suit, but Philip the sympathy not only of the King, but of the audience too. It is shown that he is the bastard son of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and John, acknowledging the likeness to his brother, knights Philip in the name of Richard Plantagenet. To this character is given the honour of speaking the finest lines that Shakespeare ever wrote on England. But this occurs later, and not in Northampton. The newly created knight takes farewell of his mother and brother to follow the fortunes of the King in France. This scene occupies the whole of the first act, and we do not return to Northampton till the opening scene of the fourth act.

NORTHAMPTON. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

This is one of the most harrowing scenes in Shakespeare. There has been much controversy as to the exact locality of this incident. For instance, Mr. Halliwell-Philipps lays it in Dover, and Grant White prefers Canterbury. But the majority of editors stick to Northampton. This is the scene in which Hubert is ordered by the King to put out the eyes of his nephew, Arthur, the young Duke of Bretagne. The pathetic and exquisite pleading

of the boy touches Hubert's heart, who finally risks his life by sparing him. Shakespeare does not give the impression that this Hubert was a very important nobleman. To our modern thinking he appears in this play rather like a leading gangster whose heart can be touched by sobstuff. In reality, Hubert de Burgh was finally created Earl of Kent by Henry III, and he was the great-grandson of Robert, Earl of Cornwall, who was half-brother to William the Conqueror. He was also descended from Charlemagne. He was made Lord Chamberlain, The Warden of the Welsh Marches, Senechal of Poitou, Sheriff of Five Counties, besides being Governor of several castles. He stood as a security to John in the signing of Magna Charta, and was a steadfast friend to the King until John's death. He was the defender of Dover Castle, which he held successfully with a garrison of only 140 for four months against the French siege. The last of his four wives was Margaret, daughter of the Scotch King, William the Lion.

But though Shakespeare does little to raise his state much higher than a hired assassin, his repentance at having consented to the deed of destroying Arthur makes us love the man. Hubert, having spared him, tells Arthur that he must give out that he is dead.

NORTHAMPTON. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE PALACE.

This scene follows the sparing of Arthur by Hubert. We see King John once more crowned, and Pembroke asking for Arthur's freedom. But Hubert has already whispered that the boy is dead, and the King, forced to tell this news, is left by Pembroke and Salisbury. Then comes the messenger from France, who tells John, already repenting of Arthur's death, that the French are in arms against him and that his mother, Queen Elinor, and the Lady Constance, Arthur's mother, have both died. Then the Bastard enters with Peter of Pomfret, who has been prophesying that by the following Ascension Day John should deliver up his crown. It is historically reported that Peter was imprisoned in Corfe Castle till the day arrived, and was put to death when the King was still living, upon the Ascension Day in question. But in order to twist the prophecy to save his own life, John handed over the crown upon the preceding day to the Pope's representative. Thus, by giving up his crown and receiving it again, he imagined that he had saved his life, and all this because he feared the words of the hermit were bound to come true somehow. The Bastard then tells the King that everyone suspects Arthur was

killed at John's direction. Therefore when Hubert re-enters the King blames him for allowing the deed to be done. Shakespeare then uses the peculiar incident of the five moons. This he took from Holinshed:

> About the month of December, there were seen in the province of York, five moons, one in the east, the second in the west, the third in the north, the fourth in the south, and the fifth, as it were, set in the middest of the other, having many stars about it, and went five or six times incompassing the other, as it were the space of one hour and shortly after vanished away.

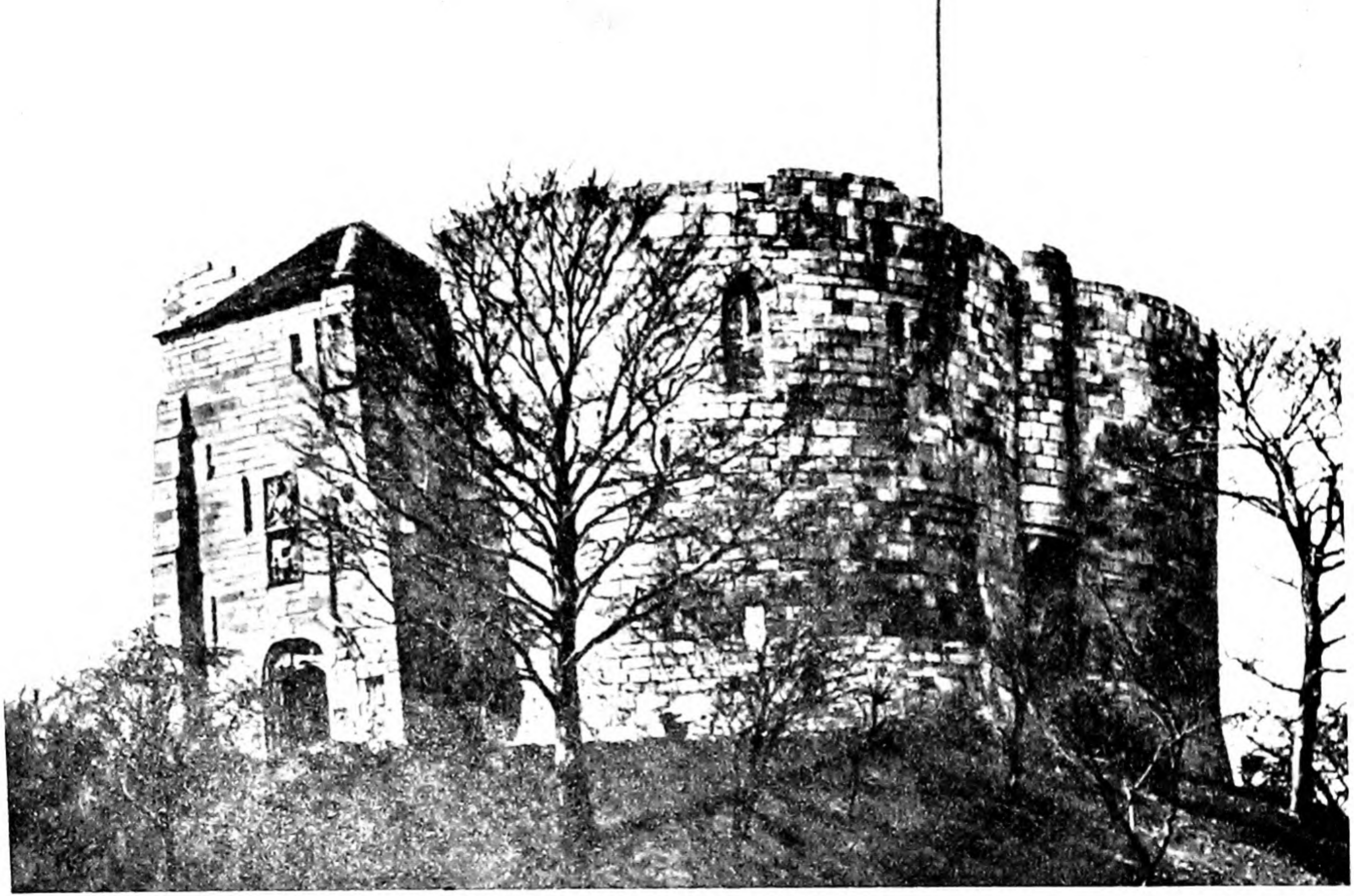
After receiving account of all this calamity, John is overjoyed when Hubert confesses that he could not do the awful deed. Hubert is sent to tell this good news to Pembroke and Salisbury. The next, Scene 3 of this act, is titled

NORTHAMPTON. BEFORE THE CASTLE.

This scene holds in its first action a great disappointment to the audience, for Arthur, so miraculously saved by Hubert, appears on the lofty walls of the castle, disguised as a ship boy, and he leaps down in a vain hope to escape. He is discovered by Pembroke and Salisbury lying dead, and when Hubert enters with the good news that he lives, they naturally think him more than ever a villain. Pembroke and the lords leave for Bury, while Hubert, weeping for the prince's death, takes up the little body and goes off with the amazed Bastard. This closes the fourth act, but the next opens again in Northampton.

NORTHAMPTON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

This is the scene in which John yields up the crown to the papal legate, Pandulph, who returns it as held under the Pope. John was the only King of England who paid homage to the Pope, and his son Henry the only one who swore fealty to him. But Henry was only ten years old when he did it. When this shameful deed has been done, John has been promised, because of it, that the Dauphin's power shall be dismissed. But this the Bastard, speaking the mind of all good Englishmen, scoffs at and rouses the King to arms against the Dauphin. This ends the scenes laid by Shakespeare in Northampton and we now follow in his mind to the adjoining county of Huntingdon.



YORK—THE CASTLE, CLIFFORD'S TOWER

THE AUTHOR AT BOSWORTH

KIMBOLTON.

This beautiful scene is the second of the fourth act in *Henry VIII*, and shows us the dying Queen Katharine. It is the only setting Shakespeare uses in Huntingdonshire. The name of this little market town is derived from the River Kym which flows by it. Ten miles from the town of Huntingdon, the castle is the seat of the Duke of Manchester, held by the family of Montagu. The title is taken not from the great city of Manchester, but from a small market town near Huntingdon, called Godmanchester on the River Ouse. The castle, built more for peaceful habitation than as a place of defence, always looks to me melancholy with its great pillared entrance. Perhaps this is merely that one associates it with this sad scene in Shakespeare. Kimbolton is a quiet peaceful spot with its wide street leading from the castle to the beautiful church, well suited to those two beautiful characters, Katharine and her faithful servant Griffith. He was her gentleman-usher and General Receiver, but will always be remembered as this "honest chronicler", as the Queen calls him after he has spoken about the dead Cardinal Wolsey. The vision of the angels to the sleeping Queen, the care of the gentle Patience, her maid of honour, and the courtly bearing and sympathy of Capucius, will ever make this scene a thing of saddest beauty. The Queen hands this ambassador, who was present at her death, a letter for the King, telling him of its contents. It is interesting to compare this letter as translated by Lord Herbert, with the contents of it as Shakespeare makes the Queen speak them. Here is the letter:

> My most dear lord, king, and husband,——
>
> The hour of my death now approaching, I cannot choose but, out of the love I bear you, advise you of your soul's health, which you ought to prefer before all considerations of the world or flesh whatsoever: for which yet you have cast me into many calamities, and yourself into many troubles. But I forgive you all, and pray God to do so likewise. For the rest, I commend unto you Mary our daughter, beseeching you to be a good father to her as I have heretofore desired. I must entreat you also to respect my maids, and give them in marriage (which is not much, they being but three), and to all my other servants a year's pay besides their due, lest otherwise they should be unprovided for. Lastly, I make this vow, that mine eyes desire you above all things. Farewell.

Now compare the magic touches which Shakespeare puts into his version of this very moving letter.

In which I have commended to his goodness
The model of our chaste loves, his young daughter,——
The dews of heaven fall thick in blessings on her!
Beseeching him to give her virtuous breeding,——
She is young, and of a noble modest nature,
I hope she will deserve well,—and a little
To love her for her mother's sake, that lov'd him,
Heaven knows how dearly. My next poor petition
Is that his noble Grace would have some pity
Upon my wretched women, that so long
Have followed both my fortunes faithfully;
Of which there is not one, I dare avow,——
And now I should not lie,—but will deserve,
For virtue, and true beauty of the soul,
For honesty and decent carriage,
A right good husband, let him be a noble;
And sure, those men are happy that shall have 'em.
The last is, for my men: they are the poorest,
But poverty could never draw 'em from me;
That they may have their wages duly paid 'em.
And something over to remember me by:
If heaven had pleas'd to have given me longer life
And able means, we had not parted thus.
These are the whole contents; and, good my lord,
By that you love the dearest in this world,
As you wish Christian peace to souls departed,
Stand these poor people's friend, and urge the king
To do me this last right.

Remember me
In all humility unto his highness:
Say his long trouble now is passing
Out of this world; tell him, in death I bless'd him,
For so I will. Mine eyes grow dim. Farewell,
My lord. Griffith farewell. Nay, Patience,
You must not leave me yet; I must to bed;
Call in more women. When I am dead, good wench,
Let me be used with honour: strew me over
With maiden flowers, that all the world may know
I was a chaste wife to my grave: embalm me,
Then lay me forth: although unqueen'd, yet like
A queen, and daughter to a king, inter me.
I can no more.

Anyone visiting Kimbolton today and thinking of these two pieces of literature must of necessity be touched with sadness.

Chapter Fourteen

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN SUFFOLK AND LINCOLNSHIRE

SUFFOLK can boast only one place as a setting in the plays. This is the city of Bury St. Edmunds. It shares the county honours with the city of Ipswich, and is the capital of West Suffolk, though Ipswich is the county town. They share too the diocese which is a combination of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich. St. Edmund, after whom the city of Bury was named, became King of East Anglia in A.D. 855. During the ravages of the Danes, the King was taken prisoner in 870, and because he was a staunch Christian was put to death at Hoxne, and his remains were afterwards removed to Bury. The city grew up around his shrine, and he was canonized. Shakespeare first uses the locality in the last act of *King John*, the second scene.

A PLAIN NEAR ST. EDMUNDSBURY.

Here is the French Camp with Lewis, the Dauphin, under arms against England. Pandulph arrives to tell him that John is reconciled to Rome and that in consequence the war is over. The impetuous Dauphin, however, thinks otherwise, and quite rightly points out that Rome having incited him to arms against England with what they had stated was a true claim, he had no intention of giving up the enterprise merely because John had made peace with Rome. The equally impetuous Bastard agrees with him, and in the name of the King dares France to battle, which materializes in the next scene.

NEAR ST. EDMUNDSBURY. A FIELD OF BATTLE.

John, already stricken with the fever that some say he died of, and which had troubled him for a long time, asks news of the battle, and Hubert tells him, badly. But a Messenger arriving from the Bastard, advises the King to retire from the Field, as the French have been disheartened by the tidings that their great reinforcements have been wrecked off the Kent coast upon the Goodwin Sands. John sends word that he will retire to Swinstead Abbey. This must not be confused with the great abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, of which now only the tower and gateway

remain, set in a beautiful pleasure park. Swinstead, now known as Swineshead, is in Lincolnshire, near Boston, and is dealt with in this chapter.

NEAR ST. EDMUNDSBURY. ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

Pembroke and Salisbury are trying to rally the French against the valiant fighting of the Bastard. A French Lord, Melun, is brought in wounded, and he warns the English traitors that the Dauphin has sworn to cut off their heads if they help him to win the day. This dying confession is wrung from the Frenchman because he disagrees with the Dauphin breaking a solemn vow of friendship which he ratified upon the famous altar of Saint Edmund's-Bury. The news so startles the English nobles that they determine to seek out the King and stoop once more beneath his rule. The next scene is

THE SAME. THE FRENCH CAMP.

The Dauphin's opening speech is bombastic, but he changes his tone when he hears that Count Melun is killed, and that by his dying persuasion the English nobles have forsaken him and returned to strengthen John. Historically it was not on this field of battle where Melun made his confession to the English Barons, but in a house in London where he was taken sick. His excuse for thus helping England against France and the treacherous Dauphin was that his grandfather was an Englishman. The scene closes with Lewis resolved to pursue John on the morrow.

Before we cross over into Lincolnshire for the last two scenes of this play we have two more to deal with in Bury St. Edmunds, as most editors call it, in the second part of *Henry VI*, though some prefer to title it Bury.

THE ABBEY AT BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

No one appears to have given in the chronicles any reason for this Parliament, called to examine the accusations against Gloster, being summoned to sit at Bury, rather than in Westminster. For such an important session, this was at least unusual. Lingard gives the following account.

> It may be that Gloucester, harassed by the accusations of his enemies, had formed a plan to make himself master of the royal person; or that Suffolk, to screen himself from the resentment of the duke, infused into the mind of Henry suspicions of the loyalty of his uncle. However it were, Henry summoned a parliament to

meet, not as usual at Westminster, but at Bury St. Edmund's. The precautions which were taken excited surprise, and gave birth to numerous conjectures. The knights of the shire received orders to come in arms; the men of Suffolk were arrayed; numerous guards were placed round the king's residence; and patrols during the night watched all the roads leading to the town. The Duke of Gloucester left his castle of Devises, and was present at the opening of parliament; the next day he was arrested at his lodgings on a charge of high treason, by the lord Beaumont, constable of England.

This third act is divided into two scenes, both set in Bury. The Parliament was called at the Abbey. Shakespeare makes it plain that Henry wanted to save Gloster's life. In fact he dares, after much snubbing, to declare that he thinks him innocent. But Margaret's party against him is too strong. Before his arrival, in his presence, and after he has answered his accusers and gone, Gloster's virtues are extolled by Henry, who, though weak, had yet a courage of his own, and to do him justice he did all he could to save his old protector. Shakespeare adds a touch of dignity to him when, after Gloster is removed under guard, he speaks his mind and then leaves the Parliament. Behind his back, Gloster's death is soon decided upon as a necessity, and it is the Cardinal who promises to deal with the matter so that Gloster should be no more a trouble to them. It is a scene of sharp bickering and jealousies, and ends with a long soliloquy from York, who, about to go as regent to Ireland, has already planned the Cade rebellion.

BURY. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

The murderers set on by Suffolk and Cardinal Beaufort have done their work, when Henry summons Gloster to be tried, hoping by this means to prove his innocence. Suffolk from an inner room enters and acts his part, saying as he trembles and looks pale that he has seen the duke dead on his bed. Shakespeare makes it obvious that Henry suspects murder, and so does Warwick, who defies Suffolk, and dares him to come outside and fight. After they have gone a clamour arises and the two combatants rush back with drawn swords, Suffolk saying that Warwick had set the men of Bury upon him. Salisbury then enters with the demand from the Commons that Suffolk shall either be executed or banished. The last Henry promises to appease them, and no doubt he had no regret at Suffolk's ruin, and consequently turns a deaf ear to his Queen's entreaties.

Queen Margaret, when left alone with her lover, Suffolk,

promises either to get him repealed or come to him in banishment. It is then that the news comes of the sudden sickness of the Cardinal, and Vaux is sent to tell the King, leaving the lovers to take farewells. There is no doubt that Margaret's love for this handsome nobleman was the vital thing in her life, and his death the main cause of her bitterness.

We go now to Lincolnshire, where two scenes are laid at Swineshead which close the play of *King John*.

AN OPEN PLACE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SWINSTEAD ABBEY.

Shakespeare took the spelling as above from the old play called *The Troublesome Raigne of John King of England, with the discouerie of King Richard Cordelions Base sonne* (*vulgarly named, The Bastard Fawconbridge*) *also the death of King John at Swinstead Abbey*. A lovely long title, though popularly known as "The Troublesome Reign". It continues in print with: *As it was* (*sundry times*) *publikely acted by the Queenes Maiesties Players, in the honourable Citie of London. Imprinted at London for Sampson Clarke, and are to be solde at his shop, on the backeside of the Royall Exchange, 1591.*

Shakespeare's play, however, caused this old one to be cast aside. About seven miles from Boston in Lincolnshire, Swineshead lies between that old port and Donnington. In the days of John, it was itself a seaport, though now an inland town. The abbey lay about a half-mile from the town to the east, and was founded by Robert de Greslie in 1134. It was apparently a large and very fine building, but nothing remains of it now, except the materials taken from it to build a mansion near by known as Swineshead Abbey.

This scene, which takes place at night, shows us Hubert seeking out the Bastard to take him to the King, who is dying from a poison administered by a monk. The revolted lords are pardoned at the request of Prince Henry, whom they have brought for that purpose to the King. The Bastard then tells Hubert how he has just escaped with his life from the waters of the Wash, which have carried away half his power. This story he repeats to the King in the next scene, which moves us to the Orchard.

THE ORCHARD OF SWINSTEAD ABBEY.

This is the death scene of the King, and he is brought out in a chair to get the air. Shakespeare, who seemed more influenced by the events of the old play than the details of the

Chroniclers, would nevertheless be indebted directly or indirectly to the account of John's death as given in Holinshed:

> There be which have written that after he had lost his army, he came to the abbey of Swineshead, in Lincolnshire, and there understanding the cheapness and plenty of corn, shewed himself greatly displeased therewith; as he that for the hatred which he bare to the English people, that had so traitorously revolted from him unto his adversary Lewis, wished all misery to light upon them, and thereupon said in his anger, that he would cause all kind of grain to be at a far higher price ere many days should pass. Whereupon a monk that heard him speak such words, being moved with zeal for the oppression of his country, gave the king poison in a cup of ale, whereof he first took the assay, to cause the king not to suspect the matter, and so they both died in manner at one time.

Historically, however, the King did not die at Swineshead, but in the castle of Newark-on-Trent. He certainly came to the Cistercian convent of Swineshead, where fatigue, worries, poison, or a sudden surfeit threw him into a dangerous fever. He set out, however, in the morning, for he evidently thought himself safer in a fortified residence. That must have been the reason of his going to Newark, and we have only to look at those mighty ruined walls today to see the strength of the castle as it was then. High up above the river this same castle withstood three sieges in the Civil War. He was so ill on the journey that he had to get from his horse and be carried in a litter, reaching Sleaford Castle that night with difficulty. Here he spent the night, and dictated a letter to the Pope, Honorius III, in which he recommended his children for the pontifical protection. The following day he reached Newark Castle, knowing that his end had come, for he summoned immediately a confessor to appoint his son Henry as successor, and to execute his will in which he left his property to be dealt with by trustees, with instructions to have his body buried at Worcester near the shrine of St. Wulstan. He died three days later. In the play, Shakespeare makes him die soon after Arthur's death. He jumps over fourteen years, and ignores the signing of Magna Charta. It was, by the way, in the "*queers*" or chancel of the church of St. Edmund that the barons took oath to enforce the Charta, which had been drawn up in the Abbey. Shakespeare did not wish to interfere too much with the main theme of his play, the murder of Arthur. The Bastard recounts the disaster of the Wash just as the King dies. This catastrophe, of

course, happened to John himself, and is well described by Holinshed:

> Thus the country being wasted on each hand, the king hasted forward till he came to Wellestreme sands, where passing the washes he lost a great part of his army, with horses and carriages, so that it was to be a punishment appointed by God, that the spoil which had been gotten and taken out of churches, abbeys, and other religious houses, should perish, and be lost by such means together with the spoilers. Yet the king himself, and a few others, escaped the violence of the waters, by following a good guide.

The disaster was caused by the waters of the Welland stream. The spot is still known as King's Corner.

To see the waters of the Wash, unless one is on the Norfolk side by Hunstanton, is a matter of luck and endurance. I had looked at them from Hunstanton, Castle Rising, and King's Lynn, but being in Boston, I determined to explore the Holbeach Marsh, taking the road running south from Fosdyke. A more desolate spot it is hard to imagine. The tide was far out. Indeed so far that had it not been for distant ships that appeared to be cruising amongst scrub-covered mudbanks, one would have thought that the Wash did not exist. The Holbeach Marsh I must own is not so friendly as my own Romney Marsh in Kent, but then it is not protected by a Roman wall. Well, there was a wall of sorts, but it only seemed to be protecting hard mudbanks from rolling in and smothering the land behind it which was of a lower level. From the wall I could see a path marked here and there by white-painted rails. These were to indicate the best way to get down to the sea, or rather across to it. In the distance I could see a wreck, and thinking of John, I felt it would be in keeping to get out and have a look at the wreck and imagine it one of his day, trying to locate the spot where the treasure might be.

I had had lunch at a little wooden inn, called either Sea View or The Marine, I can't quite remember. Anyway, it was something very nautical, which seemed rather ridiculous seeing that the sea had departed out of sight, though I imagined that in some mysterious way it must come in from somewhere up to the sea wall every now and again. Otherwise the wreck I could see must have walked there over the marshland. It was very rough country, and every now and then I came on deep cuttings full of very slimy mud. It was then that I noticed I was not alone, but had somehow got into contact with an impertinent-looking black terrier. He was twin brother of the dog who had taken me over

Warkworth Castle, in that he was a remarkable guide. He seemed to sense that I was bound for the wreck, and scampered on ahead, looking back every now and then to be sure I was not making a fool of myself, taking the wrong way and getting cut off by mud and ooze. He certainly led me to places that I could jump, which he proved to me by jumping first. Distances are deceptive on a marsh, and I confess when I saw how far I had got from the inn, which was the only habitation to be seen for miles, I would not have adventured farther, not knowing how or when the waters of the Wash might not career out of the dykes. At last I reached the wreck, though I had long ago left behind me the guiding white posts. Had it not been for my guide I should never have got there or back either. The wreck was a double one. Two old-fashioned-looking wooden hulks. Of course the moment I got out my camera, with the dog posing, a thin mist began to creep over everything. However, I got a picture of sorts, and ever after I shall visualize John's treasure lying somewhere by those old hulks. It would have been a ghastly spot to be trapped and I appreciated the Bastard's remark in the play about being well mounted. I knew I was near to the Well and, though I couldn't see it or any other water. But to return to the matter under discussion. It was the Bastard's adventure that set me wandering, and the mention of his name brings me back to the point where he tells his story to a dead man's ear. On realizing that his master is dead, the Bastard promises to stay but for revenge and tells the lords to bring him to their powers so that they may hunt the Dauphin before he can hunt them. Salisbury tells him that the Cardinal is within the Abbey at rest and has made the peace, which the Bastard says will be more certain if Lewis sees their fighting power to enforce it. Prince Henry, now Henry III, tells them that his royal father must be interred at Worcester as he wished, and then the play is wound up by the greatest speech on England, in the mouth of the Bastard.

> This England never did, nor never shall,
> Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
> But when it first did help to wound itself.
> Now these her princes are come home again,
> Come the three corners of the world in arms,
> And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,
> If England to itself do rest but true.

Let us follow John's body with Holinshed to Worcester, a long journey for those days across England into Worcestershire.

> The men of war that served under his ensignes, being for the more part hired soldiers and strangers, came together, and marching forth with his body, each man with his armour on his back, in warlike order, conveyed it unto Worcester, where he was pompously laid in the cathedral church before the high altar, not for that he had so appointed (as some write) but because it was thought to be a place of most surety for the lords and other of his friends there to assemble, and to take order in their business now after his decease. And because he was somewhat fat and corpulent, his bowels were taken out of his body, and buried at Croxton abbey, a house of monks of the order called Praemonstratenses in Staffordshire, the abbot of which house was his physician.

It is said that the remains of King John were discovered beneath the pavement of the choir in 1597, and the effigy of him which formed the original cover of the stone coffin in which these remains were lying may yet be seen on his much-visited tomb in Worcester Cathedral. I have two visions of John always alive in my mind's eye. Both concern Beerbohm Tree. One was a scene where he talked to Hubert about Arthur, and kept absent-mindedly chopping off the heads of flowers with his sword, and the other the magnificent portrait of him painted by Charles Buchell for the Foyer of His Majesty's, or, as it was then, Her Majesty's Theatre, in the Haymarket. That, I am sure, is the real John. Picturesque, cunning, and yet most royal.

Chapter Fifteen

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN WILTSHIRE AND HAMPSHIRE

One setting in each of these counties.

The Wiltshire scene is the city of Salisbury, market and county town. Here is a perfect English cathedral city, with its beautifully grassed Close and the loftiest spire in the country. Here the River Avon is joined by three small rivers, Bourne, Nadder, and Wylye. The Close is guarded by its old gates and within it are lovely college buildings and old-world houses. The city possesses three fine old churches besides the cathedral, St. Thomas, St. Martin, St. Edmund.

St. Nicholas Hospital has its own inspiring chapel. Cathedral towns always have good old inns, and Salisbury has the old *George*. An interesting feature is the Poultry Cross of the fifteenth century. There is an old Hall, formerly the guildhall, and the city is marked out in squares, called chequers, about the spacious market-place. Another name for Salisbury is New Sarum, to distinguish it from Old Sarum, which lies some two miles away. Besides being an agricultural centre it is also an important military station. All my life I have had a great reverence and much awe for the cathedral spire, because when my father was in the city for his ordination as a deacon he got in a row from the Dean for climbing the spire for a wager. He didn't mind the row, or the climbing up, but always told us that the climbing down was the most awful experience in his life.

Shakespeare uses it only once as a setting, but the title Earl of Salisbury occurs in five of his casts—*King John*, *Richard II*, *Henry V*, *Henry VI*, Parts I and II.

The setting appears as the opening scene of the last act in *King Richard III*.

Salisbury. An Open Plain.

It is a very short scene, of Buckingham being led to his execution. Buckingham's capture had been due to the impossibility of crossing the River Severn and joining the Courtenays who had raised forces in Devon and Cornwall. The river was in flood and in waiting he had consumed his money and provisions so that his Welsh followers all deserted him. He fled

to Shropshire and sought refuge with an old servant called Banister. Disguised as a labourer, he was betrayed by his host and arrested by the local sheriff while he was digging a ditch, from which he was dragged to the King's men at Salisbury. It is nice to think that Banister came to a bad end, as Richard refused the reward he had offered. This seems more poetically justified than the account by one chronicler that the servant who betrayed him was given one of his manor houses. Buckingham seems to have made a brave end, blaming himself for his calamity. His request to speak with the King is refused, and he goes to the block in the sheriff's charge.

HAMPSHIRE is represented only once and that in the second act of *King Henry V.* The Chorus to the act says:

> The king is set from London; and the scene
> Is now transported, gentles, to Southampton:
> There is the playhouse now, there must you sit:
> And thence to France shall we convey you safe,
> And bring you back, charming the narrow seas
> To give you gentle pass; for, if we may,
> We'll not offend one stomach with our play.
> But till the king come forth and not till then,
> Unto Southampton do we shift our scene.

SOUTHAMPTON. A COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Shakespeare wrote for his own theatre and its methods, but if he were to produce this play today I feel sure he would change the setting of this scene from the Council Chamber to the Quayside. This has been the popular method in scenic productions, and is well justified. Those who saw Lewis Casson's production for Ivor Novello will remember the thrilling spectacle of the great ship setting sail at the end of the scene. The dramatic purpose of this scene is to show Henry setting out for France, and this is conveyed in the last dozen lines of the King's final speech. The rest of it is given up to the discovery of the conspiracy against him by Richard Earl of Cambridge, Henry Lord Scroop of Masham, and Sir Thomas Grey of Northumberland. The conspiracy to murder the King in Southampton was instigated by the French Court. The three traitors who had received French gold for this dangerous enterprise were Henry's personal friends, the first being his cousin, and the second his boon companion. Two days before the discovery of this plot Henry had made his will, signature in his own handwriting, with these

words: "*This is my last will, subscribed with my own hand, R. H. Jesu Mercy and gremercy Ladie Marie help.*"

Shakespeare makes full use of two dramatic tricks put forward by the King. He pardons the drunken man who railed against him in order to see what reaction it has upon his treacherous friends. They have no mercy for the poor wretch, and advise punishment. Had they shown a spark of mercy, it might have kindled the warmth of compassion in the King's heart. The King then asks who are the lately appointed commissioners, and the three traitors step forward to accept their papers of authority. The King hands them their scrolls, telling them to read the contents, which show that he knows their worth. The traitors read and appeal for mercy, which Henry tells them they have killed by their own counsel, and proclaiming their faults, delivers them over to execution. Actually they were tried by jury summoned by the Sheriff of Southampton, there being enough lords at the port for them to be convicted by their peers. Grey, being but a knight, was executed before the others, who suffered death on the 5th of August 1415. The discovery of this dangerous treason lurking in his way to hinder the conquest of France was to the young King a happy omen of a fair and lucky war.

During the time the fleet of no less than fifteen hundred sail was getting ready for what was then a most hazardous crossing, the King resided in Portchester Castle, a Norman stronghold, the ruins of which may still be seen in modern Porchester, which now lies inland. The men-at-arms, archers, engineers, gunners, and armourers crowd the beach of Southampton under the shadow of the castle. They embark with their horses and provisions upon the decks of shallow vessels that drift down to the broad water of the Solent. We can imagine the civilians crowding through the Norman Bargate of Southampton to see them sail. The King's flagship is the *Trinity*, moored somewhere between Southampton and Portsmouth, which the King boards on Saturday, the 10th of August. On the Sunday they set sail, bound for Normandy, and we can imagine the warlike Harry crying out Shakespeare's lines ;

> Cheerly to sea! the signs of war advance:
> No king of England, if not king of France.

On the Tuesday, at noon, the *Trinity* leads the fleet into the mouth of the Seine, and they cast anchor some three miles from

their first objective, Harfleur, where the army landed from small boats with no resistance from the natives, and took up a position on a hill near the important town, which was the strongest port of Normandy. The place of their landing was rough with great stones, and the town was protected by a dyke, a wall and a marsh, all of which presented the greatest difficulty for the invaders. The French army, under the Constable of France, was fortunately at Rouen, so that Henry was able to get his troops on both sides of the town and to form a blockade to the sea. Had he been attacked at this landing things might have fallen out very differently. This was the first siege in which we hear mention of guns as well as engines being used by the English. Stout work was done by the miners on both sides. There were mines and counter-mines, but the town was surrendered after a thirty-six day siege.

The rest of this play is laid wholly in France.

With its magnificent docks, Southampton is a very different place today. A busy and thriving harbour town. Apart from the Bargate, which is a striking relic of its old fortifications, there is the old Hospital of God's House which dates from the twelfth century. I remember the days of the horse trams that ran from the town up the avenue, and how people were warned to keep their heads down if they were riding on the top as they were passing beneath the arch of Bargate. It may be remembered that Henry, the third Earl of Southampton, was the patron to whom Shakespeare dedicated both *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*. He died while on active service in 1624. Southampton Row was built on his London property.

Chapter Sixteen

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

THIS beautiful county is used seven times by Shakespeare as a background for his scenes. At one time it was one of the richest of our counties, owing to the fact that it had been the centre of the woollen industry. Consequently it is a county that possesses many fine churches and picturesque market towns, such as Chipping Campden. It contains two bishoprics, Bristol and Gloucester. The former is the largest city and the latter the county town. Its most beautiful features are the Forest of Dean, lying between the Severn and the Wye, and the famous Cotswolds. The Thames rises in Gloucestershire, and the lovely Avon flows through it. Shakespeare uses the Cotswolds, Bristol, Berkeley, and Tewkesbury. He first takes us to the county in the third scene of the second act of *King Richard II.*

THE WOLDS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Here we see the banished Hereford back in England to claim his rights of Lancaster, which the King had annexed after John o' Gaunt's death. With him is Northumberland, full of flattery, who introduces the young Hotspur, his son, to the future King. The scene takes place within sight of Berkeley Castle, in which the unfortunate monarch, Edward the Second, was murdered. The wavering Duke of York follows Lord Berkeley, in order to question his nephew why he has returned. Hereford tells him that he comes but for his own, accepts his uncle's invitation to the castle for the night, and tells him he is then going to Bristol in order to weed and pluck away the caterpillars of the common-wealth, Bushy and Bagot. By "their complices", he of course includes Green.

Henry speaks two lines in this scene when talking to the Percys, which Ellen Terry told me was one of the best Shake-spearian quotations to write in an autograph book:

> I count myself in nothing else so happy
> As in a soul remembering my good friends.

The scene is a good one for the complex character of York, which I still maintain to be one of the best acting parts in the

play. Our next scene takes us from Berkeley Vale, where the last took place, some twenty miles south to Bristol.

BOLINGBROKE'S CAMP AT BRISTOL.

The cathedral is not so prominent in this city as is the famous church with the delicate spire, called St. Mary Redcliffe. I have two personal ties with this church, to which I suppose I owe my being, in that it was there that my mother first saw my father as a young curate and fell in love with him, and the other that on my return from Gallipoli I found myself in Southmead Hospital, Bristol, and received great kindness from a parishioner of St. Mary's who had known my father. Bristol is a grand city. Was it not here that Long John Silver kept the Spy-glass Inn? And from here sailed the *Hispaniola*. How Shakespeare would have loved that good ship and that good yarn! Well, maybe he is talking to that good author now. But to return to Bolingbroke, who quickly sends Bushy and Green to their deaths. Bagot he spares because he has need of him as a witness later on in the Westminster Hall scene. The scene is important to the drama in that it shows how quickly Bolingbroke goes to work to attain his ends.

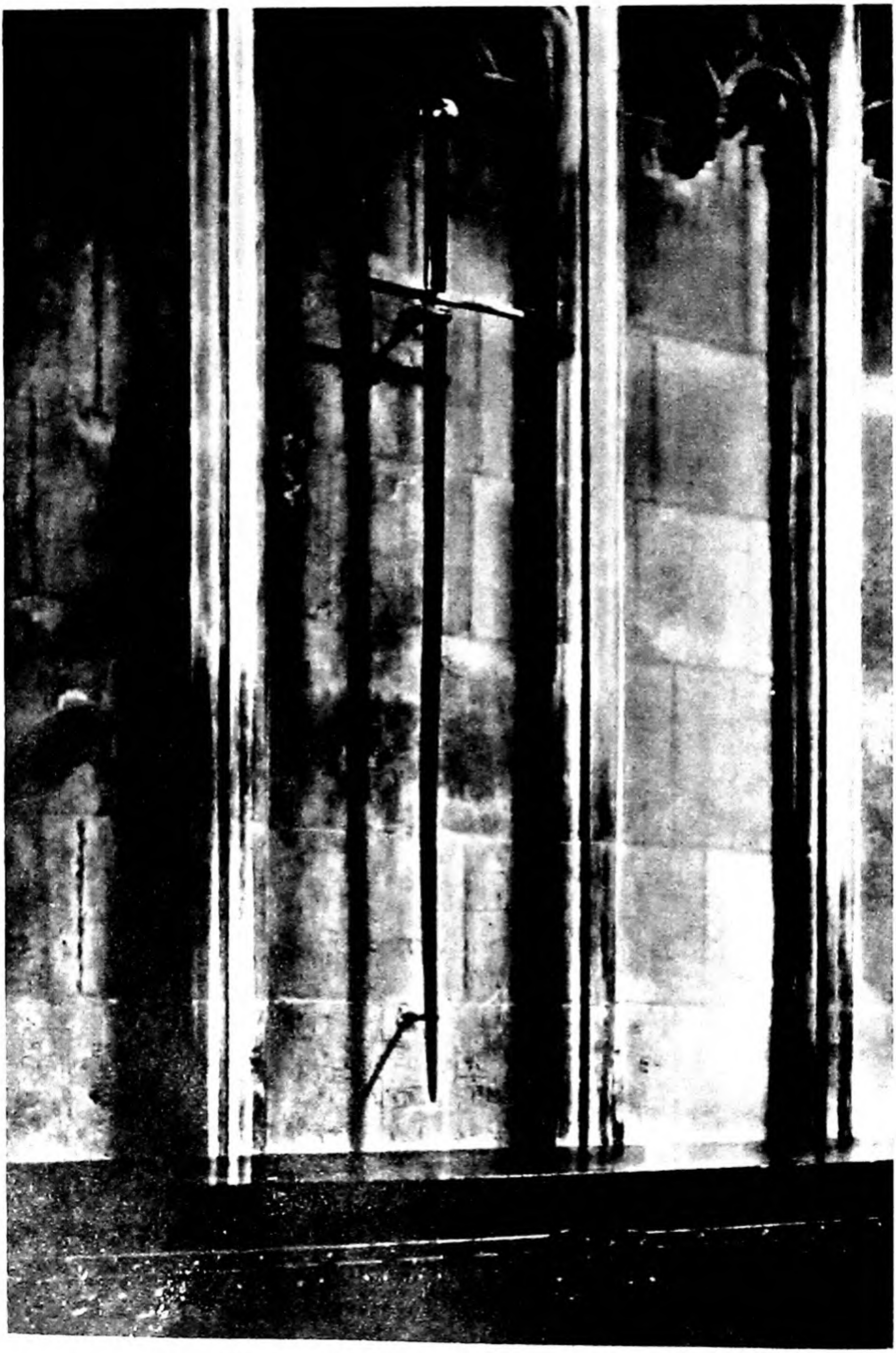
COURT BEFORE JUSTICE SHALLOW'S HOUSE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

This is the second scene of the third act of *Henry IV*, Part Two. This scene is laid in Gloucestershire for the obvious reason of avoiding being too libellous against his old enemy Sir Thomas Lucy. But it is certain that Shakespeare was visualizing Charlcote in Warwickshire when he wrote it. Before the comfortable house, old Falstaff, living on the fat of the land, has come to gather recruits for his ragged army. This glorious skit upon conscription, or pricking, is as topical today as it then was. In the last war there were many Mouldies, Feebles, and Bullcalfs, not to mention many Warts. So will there be in every country when men are forcibly called to the colours, and where there are such non-commissioned officers as poor old Bardolph. Certainly the descendants of Feeble became most admirable soldiers in our Great Wars, though their willingness may have been put upon by the old soldiers. This scene is merely a grand piece of fooling at the expense of recruiting.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE. A HALL IN SHALLOW'S HOUSE.

Thus opens the fifth act of the same play. Here is old Shallow lording it in his most ridiculous style, and the crafty Falstaff allowing nothing to escape him that may be recounted after to

GEORGE INN, SOUTHWARK. HERE ARE BALCONIES FROM WHICH PEOPLE WATCHED SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN THE COURTYARD



THE SPIRIT OF ENGLAND'S CHIVALRY. THE SWORD OF KING EDWARD III, FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF THE GARTER

Prince Hal for his amusement. For Shallow he has the smallest opinion, but he knows he is a good source from which to line his purse. Therefore he hangs on.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE. THE GARDEN OF SHALLOW'S HOUSE.

The scene starts in a pleasant, mellow vein, with Shallow perhaps too mellow with the wine he has had for supper.

It is a scene so slight in its opening that it can go for nothing, and yet in the hands of artists this slightness begot of futile brains bemused with drink can be a riot of silly humour, livened with the ridiculous singing of Silence. But drama is knocking at the gates in the shape of Pistol, who brings news that the old King is dead and the new one reigns. Immediately Falstaff is on the top of the world. He offers rewards to all about him. He calls for his boots. They must ride tonight, though Master Silence must be carried to bed. Master Shallow, my lord Shallow can be whatever he asks. Falstaff is now, in his own mind, the steward of Fortune. He tells them that he knows the young King is sick to see him. Anyone's horses will do, because from now on Falstaff is England's law, and happy are they who have been his friends, and woe, at last, to his old enemy, the Lord Chief Justice. Yet was this wild enthusiasm quite sincere? It is a terrible thought, but did he then suspect that all would not be well, and that Henry's reformation would be his ruin? If he did, he could not afford to show it. While optimism reigned, there might be more gold to be persuaded from Shallow's purse. So he drags the old justice after him to witness Prince Hal's coronation, and, alas, Falstaff's degradation too.

Near the junction of the Severn and the Avon stands Tewkesbury, with its abbey church once part of the Benedictine monastery. It is used by Shakespeare in the last act of *Henry VI*, Part Three, Scene IV.

PLAINS NEAR TEWKESBURY.

A short scene preparing for the more important one that follows it. Margaret's army confronting the forces of Edward, Clarence and Gloster. They are about to embark upon the stormy battle of Tewkesbury, which proved so fatal to the Lancastrians. The battle oration from Queen Margaret, by which she hopes to cheer her followers, is a grand piece of desperate courage, which is backed up by the young Prince of Wales. The scene closes with both armies taking the field.

ANOTHER PART OF THE SAME.

The victorious Edward and his brothers enter with Margaret, Somerset, and Oxford as prisoners. Oxford is sent to Hammes Castle. This was the Castle of Ham in Picardy, where he remained a prisoner for twelve years. Somerset is led out to execution. Edward asks whether his proclamation has been made that whoever shall bring in the Prince of Wales shall be rewarded, when Gloster points out the Prince being led in by soldiers. Edward the King demands why Edward the Prince is in arms, and Edward the Prince calls the King a traitor, saying that he is the mouth of his father Henry VI. He then insults the three brothers in turn, calling Edward lascivious, Clarence perjured, and Richard misshapen, and all of them traitors. The brothers immediately set on him and stab him to death. Richard would have stabbed Margaret too, but Edward says they have done too much already in killing the Prince. But not enough for the thorough Richard. He whispers to Clarence to excuse him to the King as he has serious business to perform before the rest reach London. To Clarence's "What? What?" he replies with sinister meaning, "The Tower. The Tower." When Edward finds that he is gone and asks Clarence the reason, who answers that as he guesses "*To make a bloody supper at the Tower*", Edward remarks that Richard is sudden if a thing comes in his head. But Richard did not believe in doing things by halves. It was little use to him to kill the son and leave the father living, especially when the father was the rightful King and would cause trouble.

But Shakespeare makes Edward the more despicable. Having stabbed a son before his mother's eyes, he urges them all to haste with him to London so that he can see how his Queen fares and find out whether she has yet presented him with a son.

Some say that Edward did not actually take part in the stabbing of the Prince, but merely struck him with his gauntlet. But he was quite willing to see him stabbed by his brothers, which comes to the same thing as far as his guilt is concerned.

This terrible scene is the last that Shakespeare lays in this county.

Chapter Seventeen

THE SCENES THAT ARE LAID IN WALES

THE first Welsh scene laid in the Histories is in *Richard II*, and is the last scene of the second act. It is titled

A CAMP IN WALES.

Although but a short duologue between the Earl of Salisbury and a Welsh Captain, the matter of which they speak was of the utmost importance to Richard, for it was his unfortunate delay in returning from Ireland that lost him his crown, by losing him first the army collected for his defence in Wales. The Earl of Salisbury had no less than forty thousand men in arms at Conway. This Caernarvonshire port stands at the mouth of the Conway River. The castle was strongly fortified. With such a force in such a spot Richard could have beaten Bolingbroke. But it was the presence of the King that they needed, and his prolonged absence gave rise to the rumour that he was dead, and all Salisbury's assurances to the contrary could not shake this belief. He did what he could to keep them, but at last they said that if the King did not appear in person to lead them within fourteen days they would disband, or join with Bolingbroke.

A curious circumstance helped to spread the news of Richard's supposed death, and is related in the histories of the time. All the bay trees in the country suddenly withered, and then for some incredible reason grew green again, and this men said imported that the King was dead, but that Bolingbroke had come to give fresh life to the realm. This news is brought to Richard on his landing in the next act, where the second scene is titled

THE COAST OF WALES. A CASTLE IN VIEW.

A lot of controversy has arisen over this castle. As Richard enters he gives it the name of Barkloughly, which Shakespeare got from Holinshed, who says that the King landed with his companions, "neere the sactell of *Barclowlie* in Wales". But there is no castle bearing this name. A monk of Evesham who wrote the *Life of Richard II* gives the castle as HERTLOWLI, which many think must have been Harlech. This would have been the most likely place to choose, since his object was to join Salisbury's forces at Conway. The Castle of Harlech, built in

the time of Edward I, looks across Tremadoc Bay from Merionethshire to Caernarvonshire, and a more beautiful spot can hardly be found in Britain. The yellow sands which appear at low tide stretch right across the Bay, and one can cross from one county to the other, if one knows where to avoid the treacherous quicksands. One can easily imagine Richard climbing up to the lofty castle, after saluting the dear earth with his royal hand. It is in this scene that the part of Richard becomes a great acting part, which it maintains to the end of the play. He has two magnificent speeches to Aumerle and the Bishop of Carlisle, before the entrance of Salisbury, who is the first of the two messengers of bad news. Salisbury tells the King that he has arrived one day late, and only yesterday had all the fighting men collected in Conway gone, either home or to the enemy.

Shakespeare gives the number of men described by Salisbury as twelve thousand fighting men, while Richard in his reply calls them twenty thousand. This is probably due to the accounts of Richard's landing being somewhat contradictory in history. Some accounts say that he landed at Milford Haven, and went disguised to Conway, where Salisbury had gone ahead to muster the army. Other accounts tell us that he went for safety into Anglesey.

As regards the number of men who were collected and then dispersed, it is more than likely that Holinshed exaggerated the size of the army raised by Salisbury, who had only four days in which to do it, and then held them together with the greatest tact for a fortnight. Salisbury's news certainly gives the King a great chance for that bombastic acting and boasting which this character loved, and turned to at the least excuse. Having wept for the blood of twenty thousand which in a moment have left the triumph of his face, he asks them, "*Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?*" And at the back of this sudden flash of optimism he remembers that his uncle York has enough powers at his command to serve his turn in vanquishing Bolingbroke. But then comes the second messenger of ill news in the person of Sir Stephen Scroop, who tells him that young and old rebel against him, and that Bolingbroke has turned the land into hard bright steel, and made men's hearts harder than steel in their opposition to Richard.

The King demands what has become of the Earl of Wiltshire, Bagot, Bushy, and Green. Why have they thus failed him in his trust? He vows that if he prevails their heads shall pay for it. He then hears that Bushy, Green and the Earl have been beheaded

at Bristol by Bolingbroke. Aumerle, to comfort him, asks where his father, the Duke of York, is with his power. This gives Richard the cue for one of the most exquisite speeches in this play, or indeed in any play. It is the sad story of the death of Kings, and for sheer beauty of thought is a masterpiece. At the end of his outburst of grief, the Bishop of Carlisle, who was the only prelate who remained faithful to him till the end, tells him to fight, while Aumerle again maintains that York will be ready to fight for him.

It is then that Richard once more defies Bolingbroke, and asks Scroop where the Duke of York lies with his army, only to be told that he has joined the enemy, that all the castles of the north have yielded, and all the gentlemen in arms from the south belong now to Bolingbroke.

It is then that Richard gives up all, except his grief, which he clings to, and appears to enjoy till the end of his life. He orders his faithful followers to be discharged, and says that he will retire to Flint Castle and there pine away.

WALES. BEFORE FLINT CASTLE.

This stronghold stands on the mouth of the Dee. Shakespeare makes Richard go there of his own free will, which hastens the action and keeps it more precise. He says nothing of Richard's retirement to Conway Castle or to Beaumaris in Anglesey. Neither does he mention his stay in Caernarvon. It is said that he found in these two latter castles no furniture, and nothing to lie upon at night except straw. Neither was there a farthing's worth of provisions to be found, and for that reason, he returned to Conway, from which stronghold Northumberland enticed him. On the road through the mountains Northumberland had arranged an ambush of men-at-arms who closed in on the King and conducted him, virtually a prisoner, to Flint to await the coming of the Duke of Lancaster. On the day of his arrival Richard went on to the lofty walls after hearing Mass, and from their broad walks he looked down along the seashore and saw his cousin riding at the head of his strong force. Henry sent a messenger to ask for an interview. In the play, Shakespeare makes Northumberland this messenger, which in reality he was at Conway. The army was two bow-shots removed from the walls. At last Bolingbroke entered the castle, and called for the King, who it is said had been dining in the dungeon. When Richard saw his cousin in the courtyard he bowed very low, and, we may be sure, with a fine touch of sarcasm. As they neared

each other he bowed again, and carried his cap in his hand as a sign of mock servility. He said, "Fair cousin of Lancaster, you be right welcome." To which Bolingbroke answered with a deep bow: "My lord, I am come sooner than you sent for me: the reason wherefore I will tell you. The common report of your people is such that you have, for the space of twenty or two and twenty years, governed them very badly and very rigorously, and in so much that they are not well contented therewith. But if it please our Lord, I will help you to govern them better than they have been governed in the past." To this the King replied, "Fair cousin, since it pleaseth you, it pleaseth us well." This conversation was written down by a French knight who was present at the interview. There is a copy of his manuscript in the British Museum, and another manuscript of the same history in the library at Lambeth.

There is a story told too of this meeting concerning Richard's favourite hound, who up to this time had been entirely devoted to its royal master, but on being called by Bolingbroke left the King's side, and would no more return to him, but followed his rival as though knowing he was to be the next King, and being a courtier, having an eye to the future. It is said that this incident made Richard realize that he had indeed lost all.

In Tree's production at Her Majesty's Theatre, this incident was most beautifully performed by a trained hound. It was a most effective piece of production.

The historian Stow, who copied details from the French knight's diary, describes the departure from Flint Castle:

> The duke with a high sharpe voyce bade them bring forth the kings horses, and then two little nagges, not worth forty franks, were brought forth: the king was set on the one, and the earle of Salisburie on the other.

Apparently this degradation was repeated in Chester, for the account continues:

> and thus the duke brought the king from Chester, where he was delivered to the duke of Gloucester's sonne, and to the earle of Arundel's sonne (that loved him but little, for he had put their fathers to death), who led him straight to the castle.

This sad scene is the last one laid in Wales in this play, and for the next we go to the play of *Henry IV*, Part One, where the third act opens in

BANGOR. A ROOM IN THE ARCHDEACON'S HOUSE.

This is a spirited scene with Hotspur, Worcester, Mortimer, and Glendower, dividing the map of the kingdom, and settling on their proper shares. Shakespeare always sees a lot of humour in Welshmen, and in this interview he makes Glendower very laughable. Glendower, called "damned" by the King and "great" by Hotspur, was determined to win the independence of Wales, and he had been joined by the Percys, who needed his strength against the King for their own ends as well. The source of this scene is Holinshed, who says:

> Herewith, they by their deputies in the house of the archdeacon of Bangor, divided the realm amongst them, causing a tripartite indenture to be made and sealed with their seals, by the covenants whereof all England from Severn and Trent, south and eastward, was assigned to the earle of March; all Wales, and the lands beyond the Severn westward, were appointed to Owen Glendower: and all the remnant from Trent northward, to the lord Percie.

Apparently Henry did not know of this confederacy, but gathered a great army to go into Wales, unaware that the Percys and Douglas with his Scots had joined forces with Glendower. The strange powers of magic said to be possessed by this Welshman were taken by Shakespeare from Holinshed, who says:

> Strange wonders happened (as men reported) at the nativity of this man, for the same night he was borne, all his father's horses in the stable were found to stand in blood up to their bellies.

At the time, the failure of England to gain any permanent foothold in Wales was attributed to the magical power of this chieftain. Hotspur enjoyed pulling Glendower's leg. When he says that he can call spirits from the vasty deep, Hotspur says that so can he, but the question is will they come? It is in this humorous vein that Hotspur drives his bargain with the Welshman. The fact is that the hard-talking Welshman was to Hotspur an unutterable bore, but he had qualities which he greatly admired. For Glendower had great powers, since it is said that the students of Oxford University left their studies to fight for a free Wales. Had fate not prevented him from joining Hotspur in the Battle of Shrewsbury, his part of the map drawn up in this scene might have materialized, and he would not have been condemned to finish his career in obscurity. Bangor in Caernarvonshire is the city of the University College of North Wales, and has been the

See of a Bishop from the sixth century. There is another Bangor in Flintshire, but that is only a village. Two other Bangors are in Ireland and the State of Maine.

This scene brings Wales to an end in the Historical Plays, but it has a place in that comparatively mythical play, *Cymbeline*.

This is a story, though taken from Holinshed's Chronicles, that has been pronounced as devoid of historical truth. Britain, Rome, and Wales share the settings, but in much the same sort of vagueness as regards exact geography as the play of *Lear*. But just as *Lear* has got one definite title, DOVER, so in *Cymbeline* is Milford Haven placed.

The first Welsh scene occurs in the third act, scene three.

WALES. A MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRY WITH A CAVE.

Here we meet with Belarius and the two sons of the King, who think he is their father. But the next scene is definite as

NEAR MILFORD HAVEN.

This is the scene when Pisanio tells Imogen that he has had orders from her husband to kill her, which he finds he cannot do, and advises her to wear the disguise of a boy, and take service under the noble Lucius. In this way she will hear daily news of the husband whom she loves and who has been poisoned against her. She next appears in

WALES. BEFORE THE CAVE OF BELARIUS.

Here she is befriended by Belarius and the two brothers, and taken into their cave. The fourth act opens in

WALES. THE FOREST, NEAR THE CAVE OF BELARIUS.

This scene is given up to a soliloquy of Cloten, and passes on to his death in the next scene:

BEFORE THE CAVE OF BELARIUS.

This is the scene in which the cave-dwellers, thinking that Imogen, whom they know as Fidele, is dead, they prepare her, or, as they think, *his*, obsequies. This worded song is one of the most beautiful poems Shakespeare wrote, and I take the excuse of putting it here in full, because, belonging to a play that is not popularly known, it should be appreciated by all lovers of poetry.

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy wordly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages;
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown of the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke:
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghosts unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renowned be thy grave.

Belarius brings in the body which Guiderius has decapitated, and when they leave Imogen alone she awakes from the drug she has taken, and thinks the body is that of her husband. Lucius enters and finds the page mourning over the dead body, and takes him into his service.

WALES. BEFORE THE CAVE OF BELARIUS.

This is a short scene showing Belarius and the two brothers leaving the cave that has been their home for so long. And this finishes the Welsh scenes. But Shakespeare leaves us a great Welsh heritage in his characters of Fluellen and Parson Hugh.

Chapter Eighteen

SHAKESPEARE'S LAST YEARS

In 1611 Shakespeare decided to retire from The Globe Theatre and to return for good to his beloved home town of Stratford-on-Avon.

He had laid his plans for carrying out this step a long time before. Fourteen years previously he had purchased a comfortable house, called New Place, which possessed a garden, an orchard and two barns. This property he improved, by not only rebuilding it very largely, but by adding a quarter of an acre to it which had a cottage upon it. This land purchase was effected in 1602. This house is no more, but the gardens are still existing.

In addition to the New Place, he owned the old property in Henley Street, which had belonged to his father, and also one hundred and twenty-seven acres of land which he had bought. Through purchase he also became a part owner of the tithes.

In New Place he lived for the remainder of his life, so that his latter years were spent in dignified ease with his wife and family.

Near the church lived the Halls, at the house called Hall's Croft. John Hall was an eminent doctor who had married Susanna. He was the author of a book on medical subjects. Judith, another of Shakespeare's daughters, married Thomas Quiney, whose father was a well-known Stratford tradesman.

Hall's Croft has retained a lot of its original appearance and the house of the Quineys, practically rebuilt, is now a prominent shop.

But he did not lose interest in the doings of The Globe Theatre. It is supposed that he kept a good financial interest in it, and is said to have owned the properties and costumes used in it. In 1613 he purchased a house in Blackfriars, close to The Blackfriars Theatre. He did not live there, however, but let it to tenants, and we do not know whether he ever journeyed to London after his formal retirement from the stage.

He lived at the New Place and worked there. But he could now afford to work with leisure, and write as much for the library as for the stage. His mind during that period seems to have been happy, for although there is a tragic theme in his latest plays

which he then conceived, there was hope in all of them and what we may term a happy ending.

Cymbeline, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*—they all end in a forgiving reunion. Wickedness is repentant, and virtue triumphs. Also there seems to be a greater love of simple things which in London were only memories. He was back in the land that he loved, and he could write there just when he liked and what he liked. And what a welcome he would have given to his old friends who journeyed to see him from the capital.

It is known that he was visited by Ben Jonson. Also by Michael Drayton.

They had much in common, these three. They were all poets, actors, and dramatists.

That he was bound in friendship with the neighbouring gentry goes without saying. His influence at Court brought him the respect which his work commanded.

Still a good man of business, as he must have been at The Globe Theatre, he did not allow himself to be put upon. He was not afraid to use the Law when unable to get loaned money returned.

He no doubt gave his advice and perhaps money for the re-building of The Globe Theatre after the fire which destroyed it in 1613. There is a pleasant little entry in the accounts of the Stratford Chamberlain in 1614:

"*Item: For one quart of sack, and one quart of clarett wine, given to a preacher at the New Place XXd.*"

Who was this preacher? He sounds like a Sir Oliver Martext. In 1612 a puritanical wave broke over Stratford apparently, for orders against plays and interludes were made by the corporation. It is said that the players were paid in order not to perform. One wonders what attitude Shakespeare, as a leading townsman, took about that.

Just before his death Shakespeare had the happiness of seeing his daughter Judith married to Thomas Quiney, who was four years younger than she was. He was a vintner, was appointed a member of the corporation and finally chamberlain.

Before this marriage, Shakespeare gave instructions for his will. A draft copy was complete, but the fair copy was not ready when the poet was taken suddenly ill. So he signed the draft.

The greater part of his property was left to his eldest daughter, but Judith received a considerable sum of money. His sister,

Joan Hart, was also remembered, and some small legacies to the sons of his sister. Ten pounds he gave to the poor of the town, and to his old colleagues at The Globe Theatre—Richard Burbage, John Hemmings, and Henry Condell—he left "*twenty-six shillings and eightpence a-piece to buy them ringes*".

The only words we have in his writing other than his signatures are the two words at the close of this document, By Me.

The sickness which took him off is supposed to have been a fever. There is certainly an account written by John Ward, vicar of Stratford in 1662, saying that this fever was contracted after a merry meeting with Drayton and Ben Jonson, at which these convivial friends drank too much.

If so, we may be sure that such an evening would have been a magic one.

On Tuesday, 23rd of April, he died, and was buried two days later in the chancel of the parish church.

But still he lives amongst us, as he will do to all men and women who come after us, alive always in his inspired works, and by them making others happier.

THE END

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